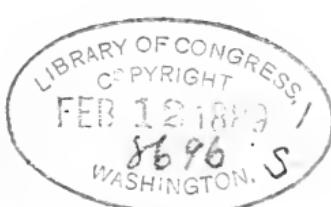


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IDYLS OF THE GOLDEN SHORE

BY
H. MAXWELL

33



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THE AUTHOR
DEDICATES THIS VOLUME
TO
HIS FRIEND
PROFESSOR A. W. FREDERICK



INTRODUCTION.

" There is a pleasure in the pathless woods ;
There is a rapture on the lonely shore ;
There is society where none intrudes,
By the deep sea, and music in its roar."

—BYRON.

THE thirty-six pieces of verse to be found in this book were written as fragments, no one depending upon or related to another. They were written, for the most part, at night by my campfire, while on the western plains and deserts, or during stormy days in the Sierra Nevada Mountains when I could not leave shelter; frequently, also, in the noise and confusion of a camp full of frontiersmen or Indians with nothing to do but sing and talk.

Several of the pieces, in part or in full, have appeared in the newspapers, mostly in the West Virginia *School Journal*, Wheeling *Intelligencer*, Preston *Journal*, Toledo *Blade*, and the Louisville *Courier-Journal*. But I have changed all of them since then, I hope for the better. They all relate to California, or the "Golden Shore," that strange and beautiful country, different from all other lands of earth. I have endeavored to write as the subjects impressed themselves upon me.

As I said, what here appears is only a series of sketches, not a story with one purpose running through. Nor have I had the opportunity to give to them the systematic revision which I would like. Other work has prevented me from giving my attention to writing more than a few minutes or a few hours at a time. The book has not received as much as two full days of uninterrupted work ; but what I have done has been done by piecemeal. Nevertheless, it is as good as I can make it, or I would not publish it. I fear that similar expressions may be found in the different pieces more frequently than a better writer would have allowed.

Several verses of mine relative to California, that have appeared in the newspapers, will not be found in this volume. Some of them were omitted on account of their worthlessness, others because I could not secure copies of them. I had sent them to local papers in the West, and having lost the manuscripts, I could not secure copies of the papers. However, the loss is slight, and there is enough without them.

HU MAXWELL.

ST. GEORGE, W. VA., 1887.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE	I
THE GOLDEN GATE	9
A LEGEND OF LAKE TULARE	13
THE BANDIT'S BRIDE	16
SEÑORITAS	58
A TRANSLATION	61
THE BURNING RIVER	63
THE CONQUEST	70
SANTA CRUZ	71
AVERNAL	75
THE BOURNE	79
THE PHANTOM LAKE	80
CALIFORNIA	89
THE SEA-GIRT ISLE	90
THE HAUNTED HOUSE OF TULARE	94
EL REFUJIO	100
THE EXILE'S LAMENT	103
THE BLUE QUAIL	106
THE TWO SHIPS	122
THE MOANING ROCK	128
ÁDIOS	134
SAN JOAQUIN	138
NACIMIENTO	148
AFAR	179
ADA	182
THE BRIDGE OF NIHILVIDEO	184
DREAM ON	191
INANIS	192

	PAGE
THE EARTHQUAKE'S PATH	195
MABEL ST. CLAIR	212
THE RING	214
ELESIE DEL QUAMADA	215
KAWEAH	218
BONNIBEL DE LA SANTA VNEZ	225
BUENA VISTA	231
A SONNET	232

PREFACE.

LOOK not in this for more than simple love
For that fair country by the western sea,
Where morns are ever fair, and blue above
The skies are bending over wood and lea.
Look not for more than this, I ask of thee,
For to sublimer heights I cannot soar.
The love of nature is my only plea,
And this alone I offer—nothing more—
On this I 've built the Idyls of the Golden Shore.

Bear with me kindly, for too well I know
How near the brink of failure was my way ;
Full often I have fallen far below
The merit of my theme, and cast my lay
In fragile manner and in loose array.
But kindly pardon this, and bear in mind
My love is deeper than my words can say,
And passion pants an utterance to find—
Bear with me gently then, nor toward me be un-kind.

I 've wandered far into the wildest West ;
And that far wildest West has swept my soul,
And set it quivering in a deep unrest,
Beyond my bidding and beyond control.

I 've watched the ocean's waters rise and roll
Against the rocks that clifffed from mountains
high ;
I 've heard the murmurs rush on reef and shoal,
Complaining all the night with moan and sigh,
And in the morning hour grow faint, and cease,
and die.

I 've lingered by the rivers, pure and bright
With all that summer mildness can bestow ;
I 've slept on flowers that clustered in the light,
When sun of summer-time was sinking low ;
I 've felt the nightfall breezes softly blow
Their blessings and perfumes along the land ;
And over me the stars in mildest glow
Have gleamed in heaven above like silver sand
Strewn o'er the darker fields where endless plains
expand.

The mountains, in their haughtiness and pride
And glittering cold, have flashed all dazzling
white
Aloft above the world—the world defied ;—
And I have asked me if the flood of light
Was not sublimer than the shrinking sight
Could reckon of ; and I have felt the rush
Of passion-storms across my soul in flight,
Roused from their resting, and resolved to brush
All lowness from the earth, and what is base to
crush.

That was the clime. Theocritus might sing
His sweetest songs, and be forever heard ;

And Virgil might his music garlands fling
With deeper measure on each flowing word,
Had they but known this land. It would have
stirred

Their kindling souls, the sweetly rythmic clime
Far in the west, where fronting cliffs engird
A realm but lately touched upon in rhyme,
The fairest realm of realms of this or ancient time.

Yet, lately touched ; for hands have swept the lyre
To anthem idyls of that land of gold ;
And legends have been clothed with mystic fire,
Hearts kindled with a fervor as of old.
The muses whispered where the rivers rolled,
And where the snowy mountains shade the
plain ;
But even yet the half has not been told,
And still remains the theme of music strain,
And part, perchance, forever will untold remain.

Ye bards of the Sierras, ye who sung
Of valleys fair and hills of snowy sheen,
Far on the western shore where nature flung
Her riches down upon a world of green,—
Ye who have sung of such, think not between
Thine own and mine—thy dream and mine—
shall rise

Aught that shall mar or ruffle the serene
That rests where sympathy the truest lies—
My feelings knit with thine in deepest kindred ties.

Then, bards of the Sierras—of the land
That blooms in beauty by the western sea—

With lance I touch your helmets—not to stand
For combat or for tournament with ye—
I touch your helmets gently. Think of me
As one who truly loves that western shore ;
And in your love, how much soe'er that be,
I 'm with ye ; and I with ye will adore
In deed and truth forever and forevermore.

If thou shalt find reiteration oft
Of azure skies and flowers blooming fair,
And snowy peaks where mountains rise aloft
O'er rivers flowing crystal as the air,
'T is but the truth, for such are everywhere
Among the splendors of that dreaming land ;
'T is flowers, flowers, flowers, rich and rare,
And rivers flowing, flowing, o'er the sand
Of gold, and high above are mountains wild and
grand.

I 've dealt as I have felt in all the throng
Of nature and emotion that were mine ;
My deeper spirit hath been swept along
In the proud current of the theme divine.
My sympathy and love are mixed with thine,
Thou realm of light and gladness in the West ;
And now my ruder hands a wreath would twine
From flowers of brightness in their beauty
dressed,
Thou Golden Shore, thou clime of happiness and
rest.

And if at times emotion storms have burst
In wildness o'er me in the darker hours ;

And if in anger I have turned and cursed,
 Forgive my weakness. When the tempest lowers
I cannot see above me blooming flowers,
 But only night, in all its gloomy reign ;
Forgive me then, for oft my hate devours
 My kindlier feelings ; and full oft the pain
Of blighted hopes return to taunt me with dis-
 dain.

For dreams will come to me from out the past,
 From days of happiness which are no more.
Then those who never loved me come and cast
 Their scorn upon me as in days of yore ;
And the rebellion rises, and I pour
 Unfathomed hate upon whate'er is near.
Gloom from the past of sadness gathers o'er,
 And I am lost awhile in memories drear,
Which pass away again and then again appear.

Would that it were not so ; for I would dress
 In gladness and in sunshine what is fair—
To think of thee should be to love and bless,
 Thou realm beside the sea, thou Beauty's share
Of all the earth. But memories of despair
 Can cloud a heaven ; and the brightest day
That ever dawned hath brought to some one care ;
 Hath brought a sorrow that hath passed away
Alone with coming night of shadows drear and
 gray.

A shade of sadness like a dull regret
 Has brooded o'er me when I wished to feel

Alone with calmest mood ; fain to forget
The blighted hopes that slowly round me steal.
What I have felt I wished not to conceal ;
I 've spoken all—all that I could express ;
But what was deepest, words could not reveal—
And that was smothered back by hard duress,
A part was bliss, and part was kindred to distress.

For when I lingered where the rivers flow
In calmness onward like a summer dream,
My memories wandered to the long ago,
And kindled in the brightness of a gleam
That shines for me no more, except to seem
As it has been, and then my feelings deep
Have flooded in upon me, like a stream
Of deluged cataracts, where torrents keep
The cañon cliffs aroar with rush, and plunge, and leap.

Clime of the West ! my offering I lay
Down by thy shrine, and humbly leave it there,
Scarce worth the room, but there is room for aye
For all mementoes of that country fair.
What mine is worth is given free as air
To what I love. It ever shall be so :
No middle ground to me is anywhere ;
Bloom lives eternal ; or eternal blow
The storms of winter's breath that wildly come
and go.

Clime of the West, and hearts forever true,
That dwell beyond the occidental hills !

Above, the heavens are bending, high and blue,
And flowers beneath, the air with odors fill.
Believe not that I am a stranger still
Intruding with rude steps upon thy shore ;
Believe this not, for I have felt the thrill
Of gladness that is thine for evermore,
And am no alien now as in the years of yore.

Remember me as one who never knew
Aught but a depth of love for thee and thine ;
Remember me as one whose heart is true
In all it claims, and who would fondly twine
One garland more of bloom and columbine
Around thy dreamy beauty—not to kneel
In idol worship down in blind design,
But every word I say to think and feel,
Emotions too intense to smother or conceal.

Then, if the legends of the shadowy past,
Wrapped in the vagueness of the far away,
Are in the mold of my own passions cast,
This much believe : I honestly essay
To paint as I have seen and felt, and lay
All fantasies and falsities aside,
And be myself awhile, and give the day
To light and not to shadows, and abide
The work of hope, and love, and patriotic pride.

Bear then the errors kindly ; well I feel
How little I have touched upon the theme
That lay before me. Vesture can't conceal
All that of beauty lives within the dream.

On this I ground my hope that thou wilt deem
 Not faults as most, but what is true and fair,
Beyond the dimness of the error gleam ;
 And that thou wilt in adoration share
With me a love of light and beauty everywhere.

THE GOLDEN GATE.

WHERE the mountains break abruptly from
their domes of mist and gloom,
Down to vernal vales and valleys, bright with
flowers in their bloom,
Where the ocean's waves grow milder as they sink
into their rest
In that harbor's placid stillness, at the Gateway of
the West ;

There a beauteous city rises, looking over all below,
O'er the images of mountains, pictured where the
billows flow
Slowly, grandly, and unbroken through the rock-
embattled strait,
From the wide and dreary ocean, landward through
the Golden Gate.

City, resting in thy beauty on thy ocean-fretted hills,
Like an Oriental vision, vivid as when slumber fills
All the world with fairy phantoms ; City on the
shining shore
Of thy greenland occidental, thou art beauteous
evermore !
Thou art sitting at the portal of this summer-bloom-
ing land,

With its clear and crystal rivers rushing o'er the golden sand ;
Thou art proud and regal, City, sitting on thy throne of state,
Hailing ships from every ocean sailing through the Golden Gate.

Guard them well, as thou hast guarded in the years which are no more ;
Hail them welcome, welcome, welcome, welcome to the shining shore !
Smile across the waste of waters ; let the mirror of the deep
Limner thee in all thy beauty, till the waves are lulled to sleep ;
Till the billows cease their raging on the rocks and reefs afar,
And are dreaming in the beaming of the gleaming vesper star.
Beckon gladsome words of welcome from thy queenly throne of state
To the sails that come forever sweeping through the Golden Gate.

O what thousand myriad thousand sails from earth's remotest seas,
Driven long before the tempests, have come swelling with the breeze
Gladly to the promised haven underneath the friendly hill,
Safe at last from the tornadoes that the roaring ocean fill !

O what hopes and what ambitions, and what longings and unrest
Have come proudly up the harbor of this Venice of the West !
O the hopes and disappointments—spirits crushed by iron fate,
Bright a moment, hoping, longing, sweeping through the Golden Gate !

Gate of Beauty, bid them welcome. Mock not hope that runneth wild ;
Thou hast sheltered and protected many and many a truant child,
Kneeling down to thee in blindness, offering himself to thee ;
For thee leaving home and country out beyond the stormy sea.
Shore of Brightness, thou hast bidden them to come from every clime,
Hast allured them with the vaguest dreams e'er told in prose or rhyme ;
And they hearkened to thy whisper, and with boundless hope elate,
Came they, borne by sails of silver, sweeping through the Golden Gate.

There are histories unwritten, stories never to be told,
Dreams unrealized and fading like the fantasies of old ;
There were hopes that are no longer, with their idols they have died,

On the desert and the mountain they have perished
side by side ;

Highest aims were those that counted least in sum-
ming at the last ;

Schemes that wove the stars in garlands have to
every wind been cast.

Vain ! But ignorance had blessed them ; bur-
nished gilt concealed the fate

That was lurking in the very shadows of the Gold-
en Gate.

Golden Gate, thou shining portal of the beauteous
land and fair,

Thou the minion of the ocean, seas, and islands
everywhere !

Were it well to wish that ever thou mayst be as in
the yore,

Isle-Calypso of the nations, weary dreamer's Lotus
Shore !

Is the mystic spell yet broken ? Has the vision
vanished yet ?

Art thou still the sunlit haven, though a thousand
suns have set ?

By the ocean art thou waiting, and ambitious still
to wait

For the Future's fleets and navies, O thou won-
drous Golden Gate !

A LEGEND OF LAKE TULARE.

LONG ago, in time romantic,
Says the legendary lore ;
Long before the wide Atlantic
Bore Columbus to our shore ;
In a castle green with bowers,
All encircled round with flowers,
Once there was an exiled fairy
Had a home by Lake Tulare.

Beautiful, with trees before it,
Stood the castle on the strand,
And the breezes whispered o'er it
Like the winds of Fairy-land ;
And the lily-vines were clinging
O'er the walls, and birds were singing
Where the passing sun and shadow
Played around that El Dorado.

When all storms were sweetly sleeping
On the waters calm and still,
And the waving willows weeping,
Gently felt the zephyr's thrill,
Then the fairy oft went sailing
In a boat with silver railing,
Trimmed with roses, lightly riding
O'er Tulare, gliding, gliding.

Many and many a year had ended,
And the fairy still was there ;
Ne'er had human feet descended
Near the castle anywhere ;
Yet she ne'er was sad or lonely,
She was nature's, nature's only,
Softly, sweetly singing, sailing
In the boat with silver railing.

In the springtime's happy hours,
When the sky was blue and clear,
And the fragrance from the flowers
Down the shore was wafted near ;
Then the fairy's song rose clearer,
And the echoes hovered nearer
Round the boat with silver railing,
O'er Tulare sailing, sailing.

But one eve, the fairy, sleeping
'Neath the sweet and silent shade,
Heard a voice like some one weeping ;
She awoke and felt afraid.
Then came strangers rudely riding
Down the shore. She, quickly gliding
In her boat with silver railing,
O'er the lake went sailing, sailing.

Then the trees and castle faded—
Melted in the evening air—
And the ugly lake-birds waded
Where had bloomed the gardens fair ;
And when came the strangers, castle,
Flower, tendril, wreath, and tassel,

All were gone, and sunlight only
Lit the lake shore, drear and lonely.

And the boat with silver railing
Passed and left no wave or wake,
While the evening wind was wailing
O'er the lonely, lonely lake.

All was fading, sunlight clinging
To the sails, the sweet voice singing
Where the falling mists were blended,
As the evening shades descended.

Farther off the light boat glided,
Farther off across the tide ;
And the crystal waves divided,
Lightly shone on either side—
On until the vision ended,
Where the sky and waters blended,
And no more the blue-eyed fairy
Sailed and sang o'er Lake Tulare.

THE BANDIT'S BRIDE.

CAME ye through that death-like valley southward from Penoche's land,
Where mirages loom forever over plains of burning sand ;
Where the winds from off Los Baños never turn
and never rest,
Blowing like a raging furnace from the deserts of the West ?
There it is that sunshine never fell on verdure or
on bloom ;
There eternal death hath silenced all in one unhonored tomb.
Never comes the springtime, never throbs the pulse
of nature's life ;
Summer's fire and winter's tempests hold their
anarchy and strife ;
Rain and sleet of bleak December spend their rage
and pass away,
Followed by the blight and fever of the summer's
fiery day.
Up and down the desolation of the rocks and of
the caves,
Sands are piled in broken ridges, like the ocean's
broken waves.—
Came ye by that valley, coming from the plains of
Chualar ?

Thou hast seen the rack and torment of creation
in despair ;
Thou hast seen the wreck and ruin of a blighted
valley curst
With a doom unsparing, darkest, merciless, the last
and worst.

In the caverns of that valley, in the days that are
no more,
Was the home of Vasques, darkest name e'er known
to bandit lore.
He it was whose hands were gory in the deepness
of the night,
And who fled to caves and mountains ere the
dawning of the light.
Many a victim he had buried in the midnight desert
sands ;
Many a murdered friend he'd hidden where Horn-
itos Forest stands ;
Many a deed, too dark and awful for the crimson
page of crime,
Had been his, from Calaveras down Tujunga's
dreary clime.
Sad and fearful is the story of his vengeance and
his wrath,
Of the deeds of woe unspoken that proclaimed his
every path.
At his name a chill of terror turned the cheek of
manhood white,
Awe and dread could picture spectres in the deep-
ness of the night.

Friend in all his fierce maraudings was his horse, a mighty steed,
Black as night, and like a tempest in endurance and in speed.
Like a whirlwind from the mountains, man and horse would onward sweep
Over hills, and rocks, and deserts, over crag and cañon steep ;
Up and down the barren ridges, out across the gloomy plain,
Tireless, man and horse dashed onward, spurning deserts with disdain.
Far across the sea of prairie, toward the Table Mountain height,
Vasques and his steed were sweeping like a phantom of the night.
Those who saw but dimly, vaguely, man and horse in evening gloom,
Knew that ere the dawn of morning somewhere there would fall a doom ;
Those who saw in dusk of evening Vasques and his steed of night
Sweeping from the Idria Cañons, o'er the plains in tireless flight,
Knew the import and the meaning, knew full well what was in store
For the miners ere the morning on the Joaquin's distant shore.

But 't was useless to pursue him ; better chase a winter storm ;

He'd escape them in the darkness like a fleeting
phantom form ;
And before the sun of morning on the hills and
deserts shone,
He had done his work and vanished toward the
mountains of Jolon.
Next perhaps at San Obispo he would burst upon
the sight,
In his path of pillage, sweeping on his steed as
dark as night.
Well they knew him there and dreaded, well they
knew how more than vain
To pursue him ; he would taunt them as he swept
across the plain ;
He would fling his arm defiant, shout "*oveja !*" as
he dashed
Up the steep beyond ; the rocky ledges 'neath him
flamed and flashed,
Scarred by steel-shod hoofs ; his charger seemed
to taunt and to disdain
Those who followed, and defiant shook his flowing
midnight mane,
Brushing in the face of Vasques as he passed the
summit crest
Of the hills, and left the Valley of Salinas to the
west.
O'er the Huer-Huero river he would pass, and o'er
the steep
Of the southern Sacramento man and horse like
winds would sweep,
Plunge across Estrelle's torrents angered by the
winter's rains,

Out and up along the vista of Cholame's deluged plains ;
Till amid the dark recesses of his home the rocks among,
Far away beneath the mountains, he to ground had lightly sprung,
Left his horse to wait returning, climbed a high and looming ledge
Overlooking all the country of Tulare's farthest edge,—
Climbed and looked, lest in the distance foemen were upon his path—
He would meet them, he would greet them, doom for doom and wrath for wrath !
Gazed he over all the region far away on every side, Hills, and floods, and wastes, and deserts, rolling like the ocean tide.
Nothing human, nothing living ; silent all things, save the moan
Of the winds along the ledges. He was safe : he was alone.
Down the steep of rocks he hurried, and the smitten granite rang
'Neath his rowelled heels ; and daggers smote with low and deadly clang
'Gainst his belt of pistols. Downward over rocks that seemed to spurn
Human feet. His night-black charger proudly waited his return.

Home again unharmed, and Vasques stroked his horse. Then in the shade

Of his cave he counted over what he 'd garnered in
the raid.

As he counted gold and silver and the jewels he
had brought,

O'er his swarthy face were passing light and shade
that told his thought—

Light of rapture ; disappointment's shade ; for
some were valued less

Than he thought for ; part were gorgeous ; part he
held as nothingness.

Counted down, he hid his treasure, with the spoils
of raids before,

In a secret crystal crevice underneath the cavern
door.

This was Vasques, he the terror of the borders and
frontiers,

Curse of California's valleys in the rush of earlier
years.

This his home, his rest from raiding ; hither often
he had fled,

Chased by bands of daring horsemen who had left
the cañons red

With their blood, too hard pursuing on the hunted
bandit's trail,—

Blood along the deep abysses truly told the awful
tale,—

Told how they had pressed too eager on him in the
dark ravine,

How he fiercely turned upon them as they passed
the cliffs between ;

Turned and slew them ; as the tiger turns when
 baying hounds pursue,
Turns and tears them, then at leisure glides the
 dusky jungle through.

In a vine-clad valley blooming brightly all the sum-
 mer day,
Fanned by winds that come and softly breathe
 perfumes o'er San José,
Lived a young and beauteous maiden, fairer than
 the fairest flowers
That e'er blossomed in the trellised arches of the
 southern bowers.
Never was there maiden fairer in that country of
 the fair ;
Never happier or truer, lovelier, more debonair.
Scarcely did the dawn of morning, dashing with
 its gold the world,
Lend a lustre to the river and the brooks that
 played and purled
Down the meadow lands forever, till she came with
 footsteps light
O'er the pathway through the pastures of the wild
 alfalfa bright,
And she pondered like one dreaming, lingering for
 hours and hours
'Neath the shadows of the willows on the shining
 shore of flowers.
There she met a dark-eyed stranger who like her
 was lingering there,
And his face was dull with sadness and his brow
 was knit with care.

He was Vasques, the mysterious ; he was weary
with the flight ;
He had fled, pursued by horsemen, many and many
a day and night.
But he had outstripped pursuers in the midnight of
the chase,
And had left their fleetest horsemen far behind
him in the race.
He had shouted his defiance to them straggling far
below
As he vanished o'er the summit of the heights of
Pajaro.
But while plunging down the steepness, breaking
from the northern side
Of the hills, and while the distant men and horse
he still defied,
O'er a cliff unseen his charger leaped, and crash-
ing through the trees,
Struck the rocks below—bewildered—wheeled and
sank upon his knees—
Groaned, and stretched along the boulders. Breath-
less now the mighty horse.
Vasques stood a moment silent in his anger and
remorse.
“ Rather had I died than this ; and would ’t were I
instead of thee !
Would that I were dead, and thou wert roaming
o'er the prairies free ! ”
So he spoke ; but as he spoke it, from the over-
hanging ledge
The pursuers yelling greet him. Looking down-
ward from the edge

Of the precipice above him, there they saw the mighty steed
Stretched upon the rocks. They shouted and wheeled each with dashing speed,
Rushing toward a pathway leading down the cliff,
with whoop and yell
Sounding through the midnight cañons like the battle screams of hell.

Vasques stroked his horse and muttered : "Dead,
my charger, art thou dead ?
Wert thou living, I would never leave thee till the rocks were red
With the blood of those who taunt us. I would with thee stay and die,
Fighting for thee, and together in one grave we both should lie.—
Art thou dead, my noble courser—dead ! 'T is useless now to wait ;
'T will at best avail thee nothing—waiting will but seal my fate."
As he spoke, they rushed upon him from the woods on every side ;
Seized him—but his deadly dagger in their blood was crimson dyed.
And the three who pressed him hardest and were grappling in their strife
First to seize him, paid the fearful cost of rashness with their life.
Then he dashed adown the thickets where the manzanita grew

Densely deep and lapped together till no horseman
could pursue.

Wrenching from his heels the rowels that were
worse than useless now,

He fled fleetly, and at morning passed the farthest
mountain brow,

And before him saw the valley glowing in the light
of day,

And afar the groves of linden on the plains of San
José.

There he stood a moment gazing out across the
distant scene,

To the northward where the meadows rolled away
in changeless green.

Back behind him mountains mingled, widely in a
shapeless mass,

Barren ridges, seamed with many a gulch-ravine
and cañon pass,

Rocks, and cliffs, and spurs, and ledges, flung to-
gether rude and wild ;

Ragged peaks and domes above them in confusion
heaped and piled.

Far along the south horizon dimly in the distance ran
Last in view the even summit of the Mountain
Gavilan.

Vasques rested but a moment on the height, for
well he knew

Soon along the distant ridges foes again would
sweep in view.

Down the mountain side he hastened, clinging to
the jags of flint

Jutting from the soil of syenite ; set his heels with
din and dint
In the narrow shelves ; and downward passed he
cautiously and slow,
Ridge by ridge, from gulch to cañon, till he reached
the plain below.
Down along the quiet river where the trees were
dense and green
He pursued his way in silence through the glad-
some summer scene ;
Under drooping weeping willows ; under quaking
aspen bowers,
Passed he silently and sadly in the radiant morning
hours.
Not for self alone the darkness and the sadness
and remorse,
But he thought how crushed and lifeless was his
faithful, faithful horse.
For himself he cared not, feared not ; there was
nothing now to fear ;
He had nothing now to care for ; all was dead that
e'er was dear.
Neither feared he man, nor spirit of the dead or of
the lost :
Life was his, and he would sell it at such high and
fearful cost
That the buyer would go with him bankrupt to the
realms of night,—
Plunge in hate's embrace together cursing through
the downward flight.
But his horse—would they insult him ; Dared
they touch him now in death ?

Touch that horse which they could never touch
while he had living breath—
Would they with their coward hands now dare to
stroke that midnight mane,
Which, like raven wings of darkness, had defied
them on the plain ?
Which had streamed on desert tempest and along
the mountain height,
'Mid the whirlwinds and tornadoes, darker than
the blackest night ?
“Never!” spoke in wrath the robber ; “would that
I had fought and died
For my horse—it were a comfort to have perished
at his side ! ”

Thus at morn along the river he was pacing to and
fro,
Waiting, as the lion waiteth, for the coming of the foe.
“I will be pursued no farther,” spoke he ; “I will
die at least
Like a man—I am no coward—neither am I brute
or beast !
I will wait ; and it were better they should never
press me here—
Better vex not him who hath not aught on earth to
love or fear ! ”
As he spoke, the fire of vengeance lit the darkness
of his eye,
And he stood at bay, determined there to live, or
there to die ;—
Stood he there beneath the willows where the
morning wind was low,

Saying he would fly no farther from the wrath of mortal foe.

And while waiting, keenly watching through the willows for the band

Of pursuers whom he hated as a curse upon the land,

Came the sound of footsteps lightly down the shaded arbor way,

And before him hesitating stood the Maid of San José.

Scarcely had he heard her coming, for so softly did she tread,

Till beside him she was standing, half in wonder, half in dread.

Tall he was, and proud, and manly, though of feature stern and cold,

Face of firmness and of coldness, cast in dark Castilian mold.

Checked by wonder and amazement, stood she still as one who fears

Something strangely unexpected that in suddenness appears.

Scarcely was he less astonished, and he turned in quick surprise,

All the spirit of his nature flashing deeply from his eyes :—

Turned and saw the maiden standing, and he marked her slight alarm,

Like one fearing, like one turning from a half-suspected harm.

All his youthful pride and kindness came again upon him then ;

All his sullen hate and vengeance toward the race
of mortal men
Seemed to vanish for the moment ; and his thoughts
had flown away
To the far Xenil, bright river, where he passed his
youthful day ;
Where he loved and lost, and never saw a solace
in the world
After that, but wrecked and ruined to the tempest
he was hurled—
Flung upon the wild commotion of a proud and
blighted life,
Left to battle with the whirlwinds in their anarchy
and strife ;
While his bitter disappointments preyed upon him
like a fire,
Fiercely burning ever, leaving nothing but a mad
desire.
To overwhelm the flames of passion and to stifle
dull regret,
And to drug his memory till he could awhile the
past forget,
He had turned upon the faithless race of men, and
everywhere
He had made them feel how fearful is the courage
of despair.
All the past came like a picture o'er him when he
saw the maid
Standing, fearing, wondering, dreaming in the som-
bre willow shade.
She was like that youthful maiden whom he once
had proudly claimed,

And beneath her love and kindness all his waywardness was tamed ;
But who had been banished from him, torn away,
 although she pled
'Gainst the hardness of her fate, and soon was numbered with the dead.
All of this in recollection came before him as he stood
By the river lowly flowing through the shadows of the wood.
“Do not fear me, gentle maiden ; though a stranger,
 I can tell
That thou fearest—do not fear me—fear me not—I wish thee well.”
She had almost turned to leave him, turned although she knew not why.
At his words she hesitated, turned again to make reply.
All the fountains of emotion that are known to woman's soul
Were in hers, and welled unbidden like a tide beyond control ;
And she listened as he told her not to fear, that he was kind
To the kind, and would not harm her, and that she would ever find
Him a friend in time of danger if that hour should ever fall—
True and tried, and at her bidding—ever ready at her call.
Then he told her he was Vasques.—At the name
 her pallid cheek

Told how well she knew his story, though she did
not move or speak.
Then he told her, low and truly, how for days the
rushing band
Had pursued him from Avalda's cliffs that front
the ocean strand ;
How he taunted and defied them ; how his horse
as black as night
Had outstripped them in the desert, mocked them
from the mountain height ;
Galloped leisurely before them over valley, waste,
and plain,
Tantalizing them, and flaunting on the wind his
streaming mane ;
Till along the highlands sweeping, down a blind
abyss he fell—
Crushed to death.—But Vasques faltered, could not
speak, or could not tell
How his faithful horse had perished—words were
stifled by his grief,
And his hand which ne'er had trembled, trembled
like an aspen leaf.

In a moment he could master all his feelings, and
disguise ;
While the maiden stood in silence and the tears
had filled her eyes.
“ But,” he said, “ since then, I care not if I die or
if I live.
There is nothing under heaven that would tempt
me to forgive

Those who killed my horse. I 'm waiting here, and
here I mean to wait
For their coming. I will greet them in the rapture
of my hate.
When thou seest the band approaching, gentle
maiden, turn away ;
'T were not well for thee to witness what this grove
shall see to-day."
Even as he spoke, a rushing sounded from the
upper plain ;
And a horse of midnight blackness, powerful of
neck and mane,
Riderless across the prairie headlong dashed at
frightful speed—
Vasques shouted in defiance, for he knew his faith-
ful steed—
Vasques flung his arm and shouted, ran to meet
his horse that came
Bounding, while the golden mountings of the saddle
shone like flame
'Gainst the blackness of the charger ; and the reins
of bridle flung
Wildly through the air their silver-bangled chains
that pendant hung.
Vasques met his horse, and shouted, and the
charger made reply,
Neighing fiercely, leaping wildly, mane and neck
were proud and high—
Nearer till they rushed together in their ecstasy,
at length ;
Vasques spoke—the horse was gentle, tame, but
terrible in strength

"Never," said the bandit, "never shall we part on earth again !

Nevermore will I desert thee to the touch of mortal men !

Never since the world has known me have I seen such day as this !

Never have the wings of fortune shadowed me with such a bliss !

Now forever and forever, while the tide of life shall flow,

Will we part no more, for hatred or for love of friend or foe ! "

And the proud horse stood beside him ; and as Vasques would have sprung

To the saddle, he drew backward—In the stirrup tightly hung

Some one's boot ! And Vasques backward stood a moment in surprise ;

Stood and glared in speechless anger—death was flashing from his eyes.

"Curse the villain, curse !" he muttered as he saw what had been done ;

"They have tried to mount my charger—curse forever every one !

They have found him stunned and stupid where the hidden ledges rise,

Where I thought him dead. But living, they have held him for their prize ;

And some reckless villain mounted to the saddle, but in vain ;

He was hurled to earth and trampled, dragged and trampled o'er the plain ;

And along the rugged mountain now his mangled
body lies—
None but me can ride my charger : he who tries it
surely dies !
No one's hand but mine shall ever hold that rein ;
and none shall dare
Touch that saddle—He who does it shall find death
his certain share !”
Tearing out the hated trophy from the stirrup,
Vasques sprung
To the golden-mounted saddle, and the chains of
silver rung ;
While the steed was rearing, plunging in the mad-
ness of delight,
Mingling with the jewelled housings, mane as black
as Egypt's night.

Scarcely what it meant surmising, scarcely know-
ing what to say,
All the while in wonder waiting, stood the Maid of
San José ;
Looking on in silent wonder from the shadows all
the while,
Ever casting glances o'er the prairies rolling many
a mile.
But, now mounted, Vasques told her all, and told
her how he feared
Nothing now, nor cared how quickly the pursuing
band appeared.
He would wait till half surrounded, then would
dash away and sweep

Onward, eastward o'er the prairie like a tempest
o'er the deep ;
' Twere in vain, he said, that horsemen should pur-
sue him in his flight ;
He would taunt them and upbraid them from the
morning till the night ;
From the night until the morning, through the
shadows and the gloom,
He would call to them and mock them and allure
them to their doom.

O the shallow heart of woman, changing as the
shadows change !
Turning from the true and noble, leaning toward
the wild and strange ;
Looking ever to a level lower than her native
sphere ;
Giddy-headed, undecided. Where romances most
appear,
There you find her, there you meet her ; there you
evermore will find.
She will follow handsome phantoms and will leave
the world behind.
She will turn to what is newest, and her destiny
will cast
At the feet of whom she knows not.—To be best is
to be last.

She had learned to love the bandit, though what he
had been she knew,
What he was she knew ; and plainly all the future
was in view.

But of that she reckoned nothing : planned as
women always plan,
Planned from darkness to redeem him, make of
him a noble man.
Woman's weakness ! woman's error ! her most fatal,
deadly snare !
Better try to build a heaven from the ruins of
despair ;
Better try to form a diamond from the dust of
powdered slate ;
Better try to change to beauty all the shapes of
horrid hate—
Kneel—for this alone can save thee—fall implor-
ing on thy knees,
Plead in prayer to gracious Heaven to forgive such
thoughts as these !
For thou canst not, blinded woman, lead again to
light of day
Him who hath himself abandoned, and hath flung
himself away.
He and thou will sink together ; he the millstone
at thy neck,
Dragging thee beneath the billows, downward from
the drifting wreck.
Thou art woman. Be a woman. Give not nature's
plan the lie.
Thou art meant to live for man, and not for him to
fall and die.
Thou art meant to be the sunshine that will light
along his life.
Thou art not his passion's consort. Thou shouldst
be his spirit's wife.

There at morn beside the river where the quaking
 shadows lay,
Listening to the bandit's story stood the Maid of
 San José.
And the warmth of all her nature in the blue of
 dreaming eyes
Shone as sunlight glows and deepens through the
 summer's azure skies.
As the lifewarm helianthus leans to brightness from
 above,
So a woman's deep existence turns to him who
 speaks of love—
Turns to him who softly whispers words almost too
 low to hear ;
But she knows the meaning—words are ne'er too
 low for woman's ear ;
Meaning never is too hidden for the wisdom of her
 heart—
To interpret love unspoken is a woman's native
 art.
But the dream of bliss must vanish. Brightly thus
 the morning passed,
Till across the plain afar the troop of horse ap-
 peared at last.
Though the Spaniard's eye discerned them while
 they yet were far away,
Yet he of their coming spoke not to the Maid of
 San José ;
And she knew not danger threatened, till the bandit
 lightly sprang
To the saddle, while the nearer hoofs across the
 prairie rang.

"A Dios"—adieu—he whispered—"Sometime we
shall meet again ;
But I now must turn attention to this troop of fated
men—
A Dios!" He bounded forward, in defiance fling-
ing high
In the air his arm. The horsemen even then were
rushing by
Where the maiden stood. They saw not any one
was standing there,
So intently were they looking after Vasques through
the glare
Of the noonday sun. She heard them cursing
fiercely as they passed,
Saying that the taunting Spaniard would have debts
to pay at last.
Words there were no more, for even then a pistol
shot was heard,
And the horsemen in confusion for a moment
scarcely stirred—
Shocked and stunned ; and then she saw them lift-
ing up a bloody form
From the ground, the lifetide ebbing from the
temples throbbing warm.
Turned she then away, remembering that she had
been told to turn
If pursuers pressed him. Truth of all she now
could see and learn ;
Turned away, and in a moment looked again and
saw the mane
Brushing Vasques' face who galloped grandly o'er
the distant plain.

Then she turned away, and hurried homeward from
the fearful scene,
Till the view of plain and horsemen all was hid in
arbors green.

It would be a mere recital of what has been said
before
To narrate the flight of Vasques all the plains and
mountains o'er.
'T was the same pursuit determined and the same
evasive flight,
Same upbraiding and defying from the noonday till
the night,
From the darkness till the morning 't was the same
defiance still,
Galloping at random leisure over valley, vale, and
hill.
Many a time so near upon him came they in the
darksome maze
That the powder from his pistol scorched their
faces like a blaze ;
But as often he would vanish like a spectre from
the sight,
Plunged and lost amid the darkness and the shad-
ows of the night.
When the morning dawned, 't was ended ; they had
given up the chase ;
He was miles before them sweeping Idria Moun-
tain's ancient face.
And he quickly scaled the summit ; and along the
awful crest

'Gainst the morning sky he galloped toward the wildness of the west.
Baffled, angry, and exhausted the pursuers backward turned ;
Hot with wrath and indignation, every haggard visage burned.
Slowly sought their homes, the horsemen—riding slow in single file,
Sullen in their backward journey through the valleys many a mile.

Vasques reached his hidden cañon as he oft had done before,
And there flung himself in slumber on his cavern's stony floor.
In his dreams there passed before him horsemen o'er the rocky way ;
While beside him, sweetly smiling, stood the maid of San José.
Then it seemed that lowly o'er him she was kneeling, whispering low,
Like his loved and lost who perished broken-hearted long ago.
'T was a dream, he knew it, fleeting ; 't was a dream that soon was gone.
He awoke. The winds above him tirelessly were rushing on,
As they rush and rush forever in the madness of their flight,
Through the hollow rocks that murmur, like the spirits of the night.

He awoke. The day was lonely. Silent was the
desert world,
Save the moaning wind, and nearer lisping of a
brook that purled
Faintly with a dreamy cadence over crystal ledge
and stone,
Just beneath the cavern doorway where the noon-
tide brightness shone.
Then he slept again. Again the dream came to
him as he slept :
Past him bands of cursing horsemen like a raging
tempest swept.
But beside him, sweetly smiling, kneeling like one
kneels to pray,
Whispering gently and confiding, knelt the Maid of
San José.
Then it seemed the storm was over, that the
danger-clouds were past,
That the wildness of his nature had been tamed in
peace at last.
Dreaming there, he thought that something might
be left for him on earth,
Other than a life of danger. He could feel the
soothing worth
Of a woman's love ; and never, thought he as he
slept and dreamed,
Had the sunshine o'er his pathway with a brighter
beamed.
'T was a dream : the cruel waking flung him back
upon the world.
All his dream-built clouded castles were to endless
ruin hurled.

He arose and cursed the slumber which had promised but to curse ;

Which had blessed him that the blessing might but make the doom the worse.

Better, truly ever better, never dream at all than dream

Happiness awhile to vanish like a lamp of midnight's gleam,

To go out and leave the darkness deeper, blacker than before,

All the light and beauty blotted from creation evermore.

Never, never sleep, or sleeping, never, never more awake ;

Let thy dreaming be forever ; let thy slumber never break—

Blessed forever—cursed forever—one or other let it be :

Sleep forever—wake forever—chained forever—ever free !

Passions mingled, hope and promise, disappointment, and despair !

Driven from the homes of human, hunted, hated everywhere.

This was hard, but not the hardest fortune of the bandit's fate :

Love is stronger than the strongest anarchy of wrath and hate.

Love will twine a wreath of flowers round a sinking human soul—

Hate and pride may storm and bluster ; love will hold the last control.

Sorrow is a deeper sorrow when affections are its spring.

'T is but to prolong the drifting that to floating reeds we cling :

'T is at best a desperation holding still to something dear,

Wishing death when at a distance—shrink ing it when it is near—

Looking back when all has vanished, looking forward to a void ;

Brooding over desolation whence all beauty is destroyed.

Such is love when lost or hopeless (little better when at best) ;

And the soul that never rested seeks in it a phantom rest—

Seeks and finds a very phantom, worse than all the phantom forms

That rush howling through the darkness of the spirit's passion-storms.

Mix with action when thine anguish is too great for thee to bear :

Mingle tumult with existence—flood thy life and drown thy care.

Do it not, and it were useless long to battle for thy life :

Sooner than be seared to silence, rush into the mighty strife

Of the ages. Join the revel and the riot of the hour;
Plunge into the ranks, and with them climb to Babel's highest tower.
Climb ! 'T is true, the curse will strike thee : better it should strike thee there
Than to come upon thee brooding in the desert of despair.

It was now the soft September. Summer days had passed away,
And again beside the river sat the Maid of San José.
Many a morning she had lingered in the shade of lindens fair,
While her cheek was warm with kisses from the balmy southern air.
At her feet the flowers were blooming, and their odor came and went
Like the waves along the river stirring in their discontent.
Many a morn beside the river she had strolled amid the flowers,
And had lingered till the coming of the noonday's deeper hours ;
And before her ever passing, like a picture in a dream,
Like a vision, like a memory, like the murmur of a stream,
Was a form that long had vanished, but still seemed forever near—
Turn where'er she would, before her ever would the form appear.

But that morning by the river he was sitting at her side.

He had come again to meet her, and to claim her for his bride ;

And the proud steed stood beside him in impatience and disdain,

Stamping, champing, in his ardor to be bounding o'er the plain.

But why linger here? Why linger anywhere? 'T is plain to know

All the rest, or almost all; for, evermore, it hath been so.

Women liefer love a villain, only be he handsome, proud,

Than to love the truest manhood of the truest common crowd.

Villains sooner love a woman who is radiant and fair,

In a station far above them—sooner drag her to their lair—

Than of all the world beside; and such a victim was the prey

Of the bandit when he whispered to the Maid of San José.

Hasten onward. It is useless thus to linger on the shore

Where she listened to him whispering his adventures o'er and o'er;

Telling lies to hide the darkest; clothing murder in a dress

That would make him seem a hero ; pleading sorrow and distress
At the cruel persecutions that had been against him hurled,
Marking him the vilest wretch that ever trod the righteous world ;
Telling lowly in a whisper, soft as angels from above,
How his very soul was dying for some kindred soul to love ;
How his spirit yearned for kindness, and how kindness seemed to hush
All the rage of pride and courage that at times would o'er him rush ;
How none ever yet had loved him, and perhaps none ever would ;
How he wished that he were worthy loving some one truly good ;
But that he was too impetuous, and too rough through every part ;
He could never gain affections, never win a woman's heart.

Hasten on ! 'T is vain to linger telling this recital o'er.
To the same it ever leadeth as it ever led before.
Woman—peace to error ! Let us spare henceforward all but one ;
'T were not just to lay before them all what but their worst hath done—
'T were unjust to find the weakest and declare that all are weak.

Though the most deceive, yet some may truly think
and truly speak.

Though their faith is as shadow ever changiuig
with the day,

Shadow of the quaking aspen where unrestful
zephyrs play.

Yet it may be some are better ; some may hold a
truer plan,

Some, perhaps, may shun a villain and yet love an
honest man.

Maid of San José, 't is finished ! Thou hast
promised him to fly

With him to a distant country, and for him to live
and die.

Reason pleaded, but was silenced. Common-sense
itself is vain

When it argues 'gainst affections. Tell the
heathen that his fane

Is a stumbling-block of error, and he will as lief
believe

As a woman will the warning that her lover will
deceive.

The affections never hearken to the counsels of the
wise ;

It is all in vain to argue. Better turn away thine eyes,
And let ruin claim its victim, for 't is fated so to
be—

Woman, thou hast linked thy fetters ! Death alone
can set thee free !

Maid of San José, 't is finished. Thou art now his
plighted bride ;

And for thee and thine 't were better hadst thou in
thy childhood died.

It would be a tender mercy if thou couldst but
perish now,

Ere the chill of living sorrow shall come o'er thy
beauteous brow.

It would be a fond caressing if the hand of death
were laid

On thine eyes this day, and send thee sleeping to
thy dreamless shade.

There are hours of grief and sadness, and of sor-
row and of gloom,

When the only mercy promised is the mercy of the
tomb.

Even so for thee it will be. Thou canst not believe
it yet ;

But the night will fall about thee, even ere the sun
has set.

Hasten on and reach the final, reach the last, for it
is near.

Listen not ; the words of promise are too low for
thee to hear.

But her promise has been given ; and he says :
“Till death shall part,

I will love thee, I will bless thee, I will press thee
to my heart.”

In a moment they were flying toward the hills that
skirt the west,

Where the woods of fir and cedar fringe the moun-
tain's even crest.

And the mighty night-black charger carried both,
 nor seemed to know
That he carried aught, and swiftly sped as swiftest
 winds that blow ;
Passing through the lines of linden that across the
 valley grew,
Till the charger, sweeping grandly in the distance,
 passed from view.
Then along the quiet valley at the deepness of the
 day,
All was resting save the whisper of the winds from
 far away ;
Save the pulse-like throb, the stirring of the leaves
 along the strand,
In the balmy breath of breezes coming from the
 southern land ;
Saving this, the deepest stillness, deepest silence
 rested there,
And there seemed a voiceless sadness dreaming
 through the autumn air.

Who will close this fragment story ? Who will tell
 what is untold ?
Who is there that knows the secrets which these
 western deserts hold ?
None ! For no one e'er unraveled half the mys-
 teries of crime
That surround the name of Vasques, fading now in
 flight of time.
Glimpses vaguely seen and darkly, each a dash and
 nothing more,

Each within itself a mystery, are the drift of bandit
lore.

Nothing certain, nothing worthy more than of a
faint belief ;

Now an ecstasy of rapture, now a passion-burst of
grief ;

Mingled all with din and darkness, the confusion of
the past.

What was first in annal record, in recital may be
last ;

And the last may be the first, and much in doubt is
never told ;

What is new is made the newest, and unheeded is
the old.

What of that ? It matters nothing. Though 't is
told a thousand ways,

And is mixed with all the mystery of the deeds of
ancient days,

Yet the final drift is certain—how the bandit and
his bride

Perished in the awful midnight, out upon the
desert wide ;

Perished, but 't was not together, each forsaken and
alone,

'Mong the barren wastes, a hundred miles to south-
ward from Tejon.

Yes, 't is brief, then hasten onward, for the end is
swift and nigh.

Scarcely had the sun of morning touched the
zenith of the sky ;

Scarcely had they reached the mountain, skirting
through the western way,
Shutting in the peaceful river and the plain of San
José ;
Scarcely had the flying bandit passed those moun-
tains with his bride,
When a troop of fleetest horsemen came across the
valley wide.
They had trailed him from the cañons, and had
tracked him to the strand
By the river, and they saw him riding toward the
western land ;
And in swift pursuit they followed, shielding well
themselves from view
By the random rows of linden which about the
valley grew,
Till they saw him pass the summit, disappearing
o'er the crest
Of the hills that border lowly all the margin of the
west.
Then they rode with speed of whirlwind onward up
the rocky race,
Leading to the mountain summit, in the fever heat
of chase.

Even now they were discovered ; and the bandit
southward turned ;
And his horse with pride and power, crag, and
rock, and bowlder spurned.
When she saw that the pursuers now the summit
ridge had crossed :

"Are we lost?" the bride in anguish asked, imploring, "Are we lost?"

"Never, dearest; calmly trust me. Well I know what I can do—

Well I know my horse. 'T is useless that pursuer should pursue—

Canst thou see that beauteous mountain rising 'gainst the southern sky?

'T is our home, and we shall reach it ere the midnight passes by.

Turn thy gentle eyes from danger. Think not ruin follows near.

Trust me as thou wouldst be trusted by the one thou holdest dear."

Thus he spoke, and hid his anguish; for he knew not whence to turn;

On his cheek he felt the fever of despair and anger burn.

Dread and fearful were the chances for escape before him now.

Looking back, he saw, but spoke not. With his hand he held his brow,

While his horse was rushing onward tireless in the awful flight—

Still increasing speed as ever the pursuers burst in sight.

Ever and anon there sounded curse and yell from those who prest

Foremost on their panting coursers over ridge and mountain crest,

And from thence could see the bandit with his bride along the edge

Of some distant cliff, still fleeing over precipice
and ledge—

Fleeing still with speed untiring, rushing through
the jungle deep,

Where the thorny manzanita grows along the bar-
ren steep.

When their curses sounded nearer : “Are they
nearer than before ?”

She would ask, and he would answer : “No, and
shall be nevermore.”

Desperate chase ! o'er plain and valley, over moun-
tain, over hill ;

Over gorge and over cañon, over river, over rill
Hour on hour the summer evening, neither gained
and neither lost ;

While the one would cross the summit, even then
the plain was crossed

By the other, gaining nothing, losing nothing ; and
the sun

Sank into the western shadows, and the autumn
day was done.

Vasques hoped that with the darkness rest would
come, and well it might ;

Ever since the hour of mid-day had they fled in
mortal flight ;

And along the lone Salinas they were sweeping
southward far,

From the river Nacimiento over barren drift and
bar.

Sweeping on, and still behind him came athwart the deepening shade,
Hoof and spur and metal housings, clanging in the escapade.
Turning eastward, he eluded the pursuers for awhile ;
But again they pressed upon him in a dark and lone defile.
Fearful was the chase, and fearful was the rushing of the flight ;
Fearful was the sound of curses echoing through the depths of night.
Up the steep from ridge to summit, mounting ever higher, higher,
Swept they on. The rocks beneath them were a blazing path of fire.
Down again beyond the summit, plunged the bandit and his bride,
Where the rolling hills beyond them spread into the darkness wide.

“ I am faint—I fall—I perish ! Pain—my head is wild with pain !
Leave me—ended, all is ended—leave me—fly into the plain
And escape—” Her accents faltered, and she now was sinking fast—
Vasques wheeled into a cañon—the pursuers galloped past.
She was fainting—she was falling. Now unconscious on the ground.

Vasques wheeled away a moment—startled by the nearer bound
Of returning horse. Already came the clang of panting steed—
Vasques plunged into the darkness with a wild and reckless speed,
Saying : “ I will lead them onward for a moment, and will glide
From their sight, deceive, delude them, and return unto my bride.”
This he muttered in confusion as he fled across the height,
For a moment disappearing from the hearing and the sight.
But the clang of hoofs beyond them told them plainly whence he fled ;
And with yell of triumph rushed they onward o'er the path he led.
Turned he often to elude them ; turned to left and turned to right,
Thus to foil and to deceive them in the darkness of the night.
But they ever pressed the harder, coming nearer and more near,
Till their hoarsely panting horses just behind him he could hear.

Where the oaks with giant branches like the eastern banyan trees,
Sway in dark and sullen grandeur on the heavy midnight breeze ;

Where the earth is dank and deadly, and its poison
reek distills
O'er the marshy plains extending out beyond the
Idria Hills ;
There at midnight closed the battle for his life, and
Vasques fell,
Beaten down and overpowered, while around him
rose the yell
Of their triumph, when his foemen saw that he
could rise no more ;
And that he at last had yielded, and defiance now
was o'er.
Deadly was the last encounter. Fearful was the foe-
men's cost ;
It for them were doubly better if the battle they
had lost.
Better had they wheeled and left him when he
fiercely turned at bay :
They who perished in the fight were more than
those who saw the day
Dawning on the morrow. Dying round him groaned
the fallen foe—
Some were cursing, some were praying, some in
death were lying low.
Fearful was the scene. The darkness hid the worst
and fiercest fight—
Deep among the reeds and rushes hidden ever
from the light.

It was over. Few and haggard were the foemen
left to tell

To the world the awful story how the bandit
Vasques fell.

But he perished. Then the night wind came and
passed, and all was still ;
And the morning late and lonely dawned along the
eastern hill.

And the morning late and lonely gleamed along the
barren steep,

Where the bandit's bride was lying like one dream-
ing, fast asleep.

'T was the sleep that never waketh. Life had
slowly ebbed away,

And her brow was cold as marble ere the dawning
of the day.

Peace ! Her waywardness was over. Heaven's
mercy can forgive

Those who blindly love and perish, those who
blindly love and live.

SEÑORITAS.*

S EÑORITAS del Los Critis,
 'T is in vain we would forget
 How you sweetly smiling greet us,
 Though we are as strangers yet.

Memory will turn forever
 From the hours that time shall bring,
 And from you shall never sever
 In the year's eternal spring.

Gladly would we linger near you
 And no longer wander o'er
 Lands and seas, but love you, cheer you
 In the world's forevermore.

* These verses were written one Sunday morning on River Los Critis, forty miles north from Santa Barbara. I imagined I could write in Spanish, and the original was supposed to be in that language, and was addressed to some Spanish young ladies whom I met that morning. But, when I submitted the verses to a Spaniard for his approval, he looked over them and remarked that he could read English very little, but thought the verses good. I explained that they were Spanish. He shook his head. I took the hint, and made no further attempt at Spanish. This is the translation. The original for the first line (incorrect) is retained.

H. M.

Señoritas del Los Critos,

In the hours through days to be,
Meet us, in remembrance meet us,
Though we roam o'er land and sea.

In your mountain homes remember,
When the wild alfalfas bloom
In the long and bright December,
That there is a land of gloom—

Country gloomy toward the rising
Of the sun, and we are there,
But are fondly realizing
Vistas from your country fair.

When the azure o'er your mountains
Bends in brightness high above,
And the fells and fairy fountains
Whisper like a sigh of love ;

When the vines are climbing, twining
O'er your homes of lattice walls,
And the quail with plumage shining
In the forest calls and calls ;

When the breezes from the ocean
Come through Gaviota Pass,
Stirring with a restless motion
Blossoms, leaves, and blooming grass—

Then remember those who never
Will forget you, though afar,

And away from you forever
Toward the rising morning star.

Then remember—not with sorrow—
Then remember—nor forget—
Happy be to-day—to-morrow
You will be more happy yet.

Dull regret shall never chide you ;
Everywhere shall be delight :
Hours of summer sheen shall hide you
From the shadows of the night.

True as in the sky above you,
Firm as earth beneath your feet,
Hearts shall ever be that love you
Till in death they cease to beat.

Señoritas del Los Critos
Á Dios, a long adieu ;
Meet us, in remembrance meet us,
We shall e'er remember you.

A TRANSLATION.*

ORIGINAL.

K EKER miren náne,
Warwar páser
Yamne krouekan.
Coope nárer mi
Koolkun i doukser.
Dear máne kuker
Cle wol proue
I sabbeane wal
Moontter moppara.
Keker misére
Yapte winegan.
Koker sombolo
Barnar lippun,
Lippun, lippunke,
Koolunker punater
Bin biwegan
Coope nárer tánes
I doukser. Coope
Nárer mi koolkun
I doukser.

* From the language of the Mosquito Indians.

TRANSLATION.

Darling mine, sweet mine, we sever.
I am going far from thee.
Must this parting be forever ?
Shall we stroll beside the sea
Any more ? The sea breeze blowing
Soft I feel upon my brow ;
And I see the lightning glowing
On the distant mountain now ;
And the verdant valleys under
All the hills are gleaming bright,
Lit by lightning, while the thunder,
Dull and mournful, blends with night.
And, alas ! thou art not near me,
And my soul is sad and lone !
Fare thee well. Thou canst not hear me—
All my joy and bliss are flown.

THE BURNING RIVER.

'T IS strange and beautiful, the ancient song
Which singeth how the Omech kingdom fell.
The dream of legends and the mystic throng
Of fantasies the train of memory swell.
And he who waits to list is swept along,
Entranced as by a weird and magic spell ;
And deep into the past alone we know
The annals of the storied long ago.

Allow me this, and I will ask no more.
Indulge an idle fancy for a while,
And I 'll believe a page of heathen lore
Whose strangeness has a power to beguile.
'T is but a superstition from the yore—
A broken column from an ancient pile
Of Omech masonry—a shattered wall
Which fell and in its ruin buried all.

In years untold, when first the tide of time
Was washing gently on the farthest strand
Of infant earth, and waves with playful chime
Sent music inward toward the smiling land,
And sunlight shone along the changeless clime,
O'er plains that reached afar serene and bland,
Where winter never chilled the summer's love
Raptured by beauty beaming from above—

In that far day from Strait of Carquinez—
 But ere the Golden Gate was burst ajar—
To eastward, where the south wind's balmy breath
 Came softly, stretched an upland wide and far.
There loomed not then those pinnacles of death,
 Kaweah, Lyell, Whitney, Shasta, nor
That range of snowy peaks and granite hills
 Which now the east horizon's vista fills.

From out the north, a thousand miles away,
 There flowed a river, beautiful and deep,
Along this plain ; and bright the light of day
 Across the water gleamed or sank to sleep
Beneath the verdant banks where shadows lay
 Upon the tide, forevermore to keep
A trembling quiver there, and evermore
 To rest in music wafted from the shore.

For strains of rapturous cadence ever rose
 From out the shadows, mingling with the song
Of myriad birds, with plumage like the snows
 And skies and sunsets where the gloamings
 throng
Across the Alpine summits, and disclose
 All colors of the earth. And swept along
Was all this music on the morn-deep air,
 And upward rose to heaven like a prayer.

Nor was this all. The vines from branches high
 Hung pendent ; and the zephyrs on them played
Soft airs like harps Æolian, passing by
 From shadow unto shadow, shade to shade.

And music sweet and lowly, like a sigh
Of love, each quaver of the wind obeyed,
And rose and fell, now near, and far away,
And near again with low and plaintive lay.

'T was like a vision from the spirit land
Where what is real scarcely seemeth so ;
Where realms utopian rest on every hand,
And dreams and vistas ever come and go
On deep pulsations down from ether's strand,
Whose brightness and whose deepness bendeth
low ;
And yearnings in their vague and weary quest
Are calmed at last and lulled into a rest.

In that far country dwelt the Omech race,
To whom the blight of sin was all unknown.
Whate'er was loveliest in every grace
They claimed and held in gladness as their own.
Throughout their land in every quiet place
Their snow-white villages in sunlight shone.
The valleys waved with flowers, the vales were
green,
And azure heavens bent above the scene.

Beyond the river on the farther side
A mountain rose of stone as white as snow,
Streaked with the purest gold in veins that vied
With El Doradoes of the long ago.
From base to summit, branching far and wide
The burnished strata shone with dazzling glow

Against the chalk-white cliffs whereon the light
Of noonday's sun poured beautiful and bright.

There was an edict in that ancient land,
The last and only edict ever there :
That none should cross the river to the strand
That lay beyond—anear the mountain fair.
And them who disobeyed, no mortal hand
Could rescue from the ruin and despair
Which would o'erwhelm as by a poison blight
Blown from the nether realms of endless night.

For ages and for ages all obeyed,
Nor yearned to cross the river, but at last
Two sat together in the linden shade,
And toward the Mount of Gold their eyes they
cast.
And on that self-same day a bark they made,
And quickly o'er the crystal tide they past,
Lured onward by a strange mysterious dream
Across the waves of that forbidden stream.

The bark had past but midway o'er the tide,
When—like a flash—the flood was changed to
fire—
A rolling mass of flames from side to side
With billows mounting higher and higher and
higher.
The crew with cry of torment sank and died,
Like Buddha mourners on a funeral pyre.
And waves closed over. All was stilled and hushed,
Save cataracts of fire that hissed and rushed.

The Mount of Gold, beyond the farther shore,
Now molten swept adown the burning stream
And mingled with the waves its shining ore
Till all together as one deluge seem,
And onward sweep with hissing and with roar,
And overflow the plains with glare and gleam,
And seas of surging fire on every hand
Have deluged all the valleys of the land.

This was the Omeç kingdom's overthrow.
The tribes had perished, or had rushed in flight,
And fled amazed from ruin, death and woe,
And left their country seething in its blight
Of fire, and fled to plains of Mexico
That stretched afar beyond the southern night ;
And on the upland east from Carquinez
All loveliness was burnt and seared to death.

A change stupendous followed in the wake
Of the destroying fire, and plowed the plains
In cañions and abysses ; and the quake
Of earth betrayed its anguish and its pains.
Deep valleys sank, and many a fiery lake ;
And burning glaciers left their red moraines
Leagues out against the north in flaming drifts,
Strewn random far between the yawning rifts.

Where late had stood the Mount of Gold, arose
A range of granite peaks in dark array,
Uplifting to the sky their crowns of snows,
And bending northward, southward far away.

No longer now the burning river flows :
It hath grown cold—a cold basaltic gray—
A plain of warping rocks with many a seam—
To mark the riftings of the lava stream.

Long ages now have past and brought their change
Upon the landscape ; and now rises high
Against the east, Sierra's Snowy Range
With summits bathing in the summer sky.
The Omech story is a wild and strange
And beautiful conceit, that passes by
As something wholly false. Be not deceived :
A thing may yet be true, though unbelieved.

Pass thou to east and south from Suisun
And cross the foothills spurring to the west,
And thou wilt find along the ridges strewn
A hard, volcanic rock, the crowning crest
Of promontories now, and many a dune
Of rocks in mighty drifts, with thickets dressed—
All this debris from out that ancient tide
Was scattered o'er the landscape far and wide.

Deep in the drifts of earth thou canst behold
The wealth of ancient days, where, torn away,
The Golden Mount has left its sands of gold
Strewn leagues along the south, where thickly lay
The rocks auriferous with wealth untold,
To rest until the rush of modern day
Shall delve into the depths, and turning o'er
The sands shall find the treasures of yore.

Yea, more. Thou yet canst trace the mighty bed
Of that vast river, fathoms deep and more.
The channel banks are filled with rubbish dead
And one might see them not, though passing o'er.
A thousand miles to northward was its head ;
It emptied toward the Nicaragua shore.
A stream sublime and grand in ancient years,
But now its ruined path alone appears.

But thou canst plainly trace the course of fire
That deluged o'er the channels of the tide ;
That rose with molten mountains higher and higher,
And overflowed the regions far and wide.
Thou canst behold it, too, how in their ire
Convulsions of the earth from side to side
Have rent the strata which the lava left
With many a rift and deep abysmal cleft.

Then strange and beautiful the Omeç song
Which sang their ancient kingdom's overthrow,
That land where was no sin or thought of wrong,
Whose races knew not grief that others know,
Where all was happiness through ages long,
Till avarice brought down its flood of woe.
And all was sealed—the fair dominion's doom ;
And all was buried in a burning tomb.

THE CONQUEST.

WHEN you were alone this even,
Ada May,

Did you hear the soft winds whisper
In their play ?

Did you hear them sighing, sighing,
O'er the withered roses lying
Where the butterflies were flying
All the day ?

Zephyrs worship you and love you
More and more,
As you pass, the flowers are bending
To adore.

Bluest blossoms bow before you,
Orange blossoms quiver o'er you,
Plead to kiss you and adore you
Evermore.

Truly you will not be cruel,
Ada May ?

You will let me hear you singing
Far away ?

You 'll not frown when I come nearer
So that I can hear you clearer,
If I 'm quiet, dear and dearer
Ada May ?

Ah, I knew you would not chide me,
For you know
That I came to hear you singing
Soft and low.
And I came to sit beside you
Where the manzanitas hide you,
And the breezes sweetly chide you
As they blow.

Velvet fig-leaves cluster o'er us,
Ada May ;
Cute blue quails are peeping at us
In their play ;
And about us shadows shiver,
Blossoms o'er us quake and quiver
Like the sunlight on a river
Far away.

SANTA CRUZ.

PART FIRST.

'T WAS a bright, bright morn, and the sea was
bright,
And the winds were soft as a prayer.
From the tranquil harbor a sail of white
Stood out to sea, and glided light
To the south, like an uncaged bird of flight
As it breaks away from its prison night,
Till the sail of white like a fairy sprite
Was wafted along and passed from sight
On the wings of the balmy air.

The boat bore two who were blest supreme
In all that there is of bliss.
From the Shadow Land there came no dream
That woe would come ; and the morning's gleam
Was not more bright than the dream and theme
Of their thoughts and words, for they did not
deem
That things are never as they seem
In a world as false as this.

They were blest supreme—these loving two—
As they sailed from the City of Flowers
With hearts so glad that no one knew
How glad they were. Then the sky was blue
High over them ; and the ocean's hue
Was heaven's mirror, clear and true :
But the hills their shadows seaward threw,
Gloom dark as the raven's wings that flew
O'er Jelead's ruined towers.

The boat swept south with bending mast,
For the winds were rising well.
The lighthouse tower from vision past,
And the winds swelled to a driving blast,
While the mists were gathering thick and fast
On Sierra De San Rafael.

From the southern sea the cliffs of gray
Arose, and the bark still bore
To the south. And the light of the autumn day
Grew dim, and the winds in fiercer play
Caught the silver sails, and dashed the spray ;

And the white caps rose ; and the mists away
In the south on the ocean thicker lay
 And covered the Island Shore.

PART SECOND.

'T was a dark, dark night, and the wild wind blew
 O'er the rocks of the dreary islands ;
And over the reefs to leeward flew
The foam of the floods that were bursting through
The clefts in the cliffs where the cactus grew,
 And the lightnings played on the highlands.

A voice was heard in the roar of the waves,
 And then all but the storm was still.
Was it the whistling winds through the caves
Of the crags above, where the whirlwind raves ?
Or the cry of a startled bird that braves
The depths of the night as it blindly laves
 The dark in its flight to the hill ?

The fisherman listened, but could not tell,
 For he heard the voice no more.
But the roaring tempest grew more fell
With a rage that naught of earth could quell,
With surge on surge and swell on swell
That burst o'er the rocks with a wild farewell,
 As the fierce floods buried the shore.

'T was a dark, dark night, and the sea was dark,
 And nothing but night was seen,
Till a flash of light—'t was a lightning spark
From a burning cloud—lit up the dark,

And the fisherman saw a stranded bark,
The cliffs and reefs between.

And he saw there two who were floating away
On the crest of a sweeping wave.

They were young—these two—and they had been
gay

When the morning broke of that fatal day ;
But 't was over now ; and the driving spray
Was flung on high against the gray
Of the rocks where the tempests rave.

And the fisherman saw as the vivid streak
Of the lightning flashed under a cloud,
They were dead—these two—for they did not
speak,

And their lips moved not, as cheek to cheek
In a last embrace that death made weak,
They drifted off ; and the wind blew bleak
On the face of her who was mild and meek,
And in his who was brave and proud.

And then all was dark, and all was o'er
On the coast where the tempest strews
The wreck of storms ; and the billows roar
On the rocks and reefs that guard the shore ;
And the gray cliffs rise, and the white birds soar ;
And the floods through rifted headlands pour,
And the dark mists hover evermore
Round the Isle of Santa Cruz.

AVERNAL.

'T WAS midnight in the Pass of Aernal,
And o'er the lifeless hills the moonlight fell
In deathly pallor, like it were afraid,
And at each shadow seemed to hesitate
As though it fancied ghosts were lurking there.

'T was midnight ; and aweary I lay down
Among the rocks to sleep ; my bed the sand
Whereon the sun the livelong summer day
Had poured his fiery anger ; and at night
The hot winds from Tejon came like a plague.

'T was night. But from my eminence I saw
And traced the cañon's tortuous course afar,
Marked by the few dwarfed cottonwoods that grew
Along the yawning brink, where we had sought
Since evenfall for water, but in vain.
Still further in the east a plain outspread,
Scarce visible, and vague, and seemed to reach
Beyond the world and out through boundless space.
I turned and looked to westward through the night.
The moonlight shone more brightly far adown
That landscape, sloping off to meet the sea,
Where in soft silence and serene repose
Slept in their beauty the Obispo hills

Low bordering on the river brook Estrelle.
I was between the desert and the land
Of summer blown. To east were wastes of dust,
And solitudes ; to west were verdant hills.
To left and right the mountains pierced the sky.
Fierce peaks uplooming there like mighty spires
Half burnt by conflagrations, and in ruin,
Seen through the smoke and mist that hovered still,
Were scathed and cindered by a million storms
Of fire and whirlwind, like the Tishbite saw
On Horeb * * * * *

I could have slept had there not come to me
The memory of a legend I had heard
The miners tell one night beside their fire.
'T was of the Pass of Avernal, and how
A bandit's beauteous bride once perished here.

A rose may love tornadoes to its death
And ruin. Even so it was with her.
She loved, she truly loved, but 't was unwise
To love at all, a man like him. Her love
Was that of a true woman—rash perhaps ;
But still devotion all, and faithful. Such,
The poet sings, as vines that twine around
The oak, clinging for aid and strength and life,
And in return bestowing love and trust.
Like such a vine she clung to him. But oaks
Must fall ; and sad if in their overthrow
They carry down to ruin tender vines
And all together perish on the earth.

The bandit won her by a stratagem.
She thought she knew him, but his crimes were hid
And all his desperate career he kept
A secret from her ; and she looked on him
As one whom woman's heart should trust and love
Through sunshine and through shadows, calm and
storm.

Poor erring girl ! Had heaven angels none
That none were sent to whisper, "Be aware ! "
And save her ere it was too late to save ?

She loved the noble man—as such she thought him—
Who rode adown the valley near the door
Of her own home beneath the linden trees
That waved along the plains of San José ;
And she was wedded to him.

Swift there came
A change across the spirit of her dream.
Her lover was an outlaw from the south,
Flying from justice ; and pursuit came fast,
Till with one sunset from her wedding day,
She saw him disappear in desperate flight,
To save himself, among the southern hills.
She sought him—true to love, but false to life—
And found him far among the barren lands,
Concealed in the deep Pass of Aernal.

He told her of his ruin—truth too late—
And begged her to return to her own home,
Nor think, nor speak, nor dream again of him

Who was unworthy of her trust and love.
But no. She would not leave him. Nevermore
Be separated from him, but would love him
Till death should come, and after that—forever.

Death came full soon. That night a clang of hoofs
Rang out upon the air ; and for his life
The bandit fled the rocks among, for life
O'er barren hills, across the desert plains
That stretched dead wastes toward Wild Flower
and Le Moore.

He came no more. Among the groves that face
The Idria Hills, where oaks with giant limbs
Swayed in the wind and brushed the marshy earth,
That night in combat desperate he fell,
O'ertaken and o'erpowered by pursuers.

Through all that long and dreary, dreary night
His bride looked for his coming, but there came
No one to breathe her name. 'T was silence all.
The hot winds from Tejon blew on till morn ;
But he came not. All day she watched and waited.
Her blue eyes sought his coming, but in vain.
The bleak, parched desert stretched before her far,
All desolate and lifeless. On her face
The look of deep anxiety grew deeper
With fall of eventide ; and night came down
With mercy none and pity none for her.

When morning dawned, she lay as one who slept,
But she was dead. Her sweet and palid face

In silence rested on the snow white sands,
Not whiter than her brow ; and her blue eyes
Were closed forever.

In the Aernal

'T was midnight, and I watched the starlit hills
That rose in vagueness round me, and to me
My memory whispered of the bandit's bride ;
While my companions near me slumbered on
And all unconscious dreamed the night away.

THE BOURNE.

ON a far-off shore where the light is bright,
And as calm as a seraph's prayer,
Where the soft dews cluster on lilies white,
Serene and still in the silent night,
Is the home of Mabel Saint Clair.

'T is a sunny shore and a crystal strand,
And the river softly flows,
Where the waves are washing the silver sand
And the blooming groves afar expand—
As are seen in the dreams of fairyland
Which none but the dreamer knows.

'T is a beautiful bourne, that far away shore ;
And again I seem to be there,
Where the cold of the winter days is o'er,
And the storms and tempests cease to roar,
And the flowers are blooming evermore
By the home of Mabel Saint Clair.

THE PHANTOM LAKE.

SAN DIEGO'S fiery desert stretching westward
from the strand
Of that silent, deathlike river bordering on the
burning sand—
River like that Stygian river sung in songs of
mythic eld,
Separating bournes of beauty from the realms that
darkness held—
San Diego's desert stretches westward from that
river tide,
Reaching in its desolation out in ruin, waste and
wide.

To that desert cometh never zephyr laden with the
bloom
Of San Bernardino's gardens out beyond the hills of
gloom.
Summer winds that softly whisper through the
blossoms of the trees,
Waving in eternal freshness over all Los Angeles,
Come not there ; but every tempest is a furnace
and a fire,
Withering, scorching, scathing, burning, racked
with vengeance and with ire.

They who wander through that desert see a lake
outspreading fair,
Beautiful and placid, resting like a cloud upon the
air ;
And along its shores of silver waves are washing
o'er the sand,
Gently as the sunlit ripplings play on Titicaca's
strand ;
And beside the crystal waters, bending gracefully
and low,
Forest-arbors of green cedars wave in silence to
and fro.

Far away in cloudless distance snowy peaks of
mountains rise
From the dulness of the desert 'gainst the azure of
the skies ;
While the sunlight flashes, dazzles from the crests
of spotless white,
Burnishing with shining silver every pinnacle of
light,
And transforming and translating into fineness
every form,
Touching with a quietness the sweeping of the dis-
tant storm.

In the phantom lake the pictures of the snowy
mountains rest,
Every rock and crag and summit in translucent
beauty dressed.
He who looks at it believes not that 't is all delu-
sive show,

That there is no lake to limn the distant mountains
clad in snow ;
That 't is all mirage, and cruel ; that the trees and
tide and strand
Are but phantoms false and fleeting, hanging o'er
the shimmering sand.
And if but a cloud of summer shade it from the
noonday gleam,
Lake, and waves, and trees, and mountains fade
and vanish like a dream.

But the one who sees believes not that 't will fade ;
and o'er the waste
Of the landscape on he presses, on in useless,
hopeless haste,
To be first upon the margin of the lake, beneath
the trees,—
There to bathe his burning temples in the freshness
of the breeze,
Which he knows must ever wander over such a
verdant shore,
Blowing blandly where the flowers blush and
bloom forevermore.

Wanderer, better turn forever from the phantom
trees and strand !
Turn ! The false mirage is looming o'er the lone
and lurid land !
Better turn thee to the mountains ; nor look back,
nor think, nor grieve
For the beauty that allured thee—it will vanish ere
the eve :

Fade away and leave thee seeking, leave thee wandering on in vain,
Leave thee crushed with disappointment on the drear and voiceless plain.

But the one who saw believed not ; and he hastened through the gleam
Toward the Armidian Garden, like a deep enchanted dream.
But it fled before his coming, seemed as far as at the first,
Flying still, he still pursuing where none other ever durst,—
Deep into the dying desert, far where never human tread
Had the way before him measured, where creation slumbered dead.

Then the sun, with plunge of madness, rushed adown the burning west,
And the wanderer looked about him for the fields in summer dressed.
All were gone. The lake had vanished. Round about him naught was left
Save the parched and lurid landscape, shrivelled, rent with rift and cleft
By the withering winds for ages—dunes of dust and driven drifts
From horizon to horizon, where the snowy mountain lifts
Up aloft its mocking boldness, looking down with sullen scorn

On the desert where the Phantom Lake had hovered
at the morn.

So I found it. Thou wilt find it when thou turnest
to the west

From the weariness of Yuma, on the promontory
crest.

Thou wilt find it so ; and dreary will the waste be-
fore thee run

Down the burning desolation, in the anger of the
sun.

Thou wilt feel a vague oppression weighing on thee
like a dream

Of the heavy midnight sadness. Thou wilt feel a
sadder theme

Steal across thy musings dimly, when thou look on
nature dead—

Beauty passed away forever, desolation left instead.

But speak not, for it were idle that the world should
ever know

What thou feelest in thy sadness—it hath scorned
thee long ago.

It is idle thus to liken all the desert and the shore,
Whence the pride and hope and promise have de-
parted evermore,

And where now the false mirages loom their bright-
ness for awhile

Only to delude thee, crush thee, mock thee, scorn
thee, and beguile,—

Then to vanish in the shadows, harbingers of com-
ing night,

And to curse thee with the phantom of a beautiful delight—

'T is in vain that thou shouldst liken all of this to blighted life,

With its promises in ruins, nothing left but bitter strife ;

With its fondest hopes derided ; all that it had ever known

Trampled down to degradation ere the happy dream hath flown—

Dream remaining ! All departed save alone the fatal part,

(False but beautiful) the fancies of a sympathizing heart.

Say not that the false mirages hovering o'er the desert dead

Are the same as dreams that hover over life when hope has fled—

Coming softly, gently stealing, coming whence none ever know,

Resting in their silent beauty o'er the ruin and the woe.

Dreams are but the dim mirages rising 'bove a stranded soul,

Fleeting fair in their concealing of the far and stormy goal.

They are but a borrowed brightness, the mirages and the dreams—

They are paintings on the shadows, drapery of sadder themes.

The mirages hide the desert with its dreariness of death ;

Dreams conceal that deeper sorrow word of mortal never saith.

But why thus forever liken all that nature hath of gloom

To the gloom of souls despairing when have faded every bloom

From our destiny and passions ? Let it pass, and think no more

Of the solitude of deserts that mirages hover o'er.

Brush from memory every vestige of the bliss of earlier days,

For remembrance is a sorrow to bewilder and to craze ;

And the mind is but bewildered that will brood on what is past,

When instead of consolation desperation comes at last.

At the best 't is nothing better than to stand among the snows,

Thinking of the dead volcano resting now from burning throes ;

At thy feet the icy crater, stilled forever now, and cold,

Where the fires of ancient ages in their mighty bil-lows rolled.

Calmed at last is all the tempest, all the fervor and the fire ;

Calm at last the heart's emotion, all its passion and desire.

Calmed the tumult and the surging of the seas of molten flame ;
Calmed the spirit's grief and anguish, sorrow and submissive shame.
Snows are resting where the burning summits held their ancient reign ;
In the heart is winter coldness—better ice than burning pain.
Better coldness than the fever of the passion and the thirst ;
Better not to be than, being, live to feel thyself accurst.
Better death beyond the power of the resurrection light,
Than existence, though eternal, in the depths of endless night ;
Better solitude and silence, deep and nevermore to break,
Than the gibbering of spectres when from dreaming we awake.
Cost of peace thou shouldst not reckon. It is better to be free
At the cost of conscious being, than in servitude to be.

Brush away the spectre phantoms, the delusions brush away ;
Let the desert, dead and dreary, meet again the light of day.
Brush away the idle dreaming that conceals thy deeper life.

Face to face confront the ages in their tumult and
their strife.
Hurl thy vengeance on oppression, tear away the
fetter chains,
Bring to life the withered flowers dying on the
desert plains ;
Cool the fever of thy passions, quench the hidden
smouldering fire
That hath made thy deep existence, thy emotions'
funeral pyre.
Strike the fools and phantom devils that will noth-
ing do but curse
And proclaim thy love a failure—hell containeth
nothing worse,—
Strike them in the face, and turning, leave the
dark and downward way,
And upon the higher summits seek the light of
brighter day ;
Then below thee and beneath thee look on mys-
tery and gloom,
And about thee and above thee look on fields of
fadeless bloom.
In the dark and depths beneath thee, the mirage
thou canst behold ;
But it looms above the falseness and the shadows
of the old—
While about thee and above thee all is beautiful
and new,
Nothing false and nothing fading, all reality and true.
Then rebel against the shadows, and in life be
something more
Than a shadow 'mong the shadows on a silent
shadow shore.

CALIFORNIA.

FAIR western realm that borders on the sea,
Kissed by the sun's last ray at eventide,
Full many a true, true heart has beat for thee,
Adored and loved thee with devoted pride.

I too, although a stranger on thy shore,
Would claim thee for a season as my own ;
Thou dreamlike country, radiant evermore,
No sun on fairer land has ever shone.

And I have loved thy valleys calm and still ;
I 've roamed at random o'er thy boundless plains ;
I 've lingered long on many and many a hill,
Where nature sleeps in peace and silence reigns.

Thy snow-white mountains rising to the sky
Have thronged my spirit with submissive dread,
Thrilled with the panorama wild and high,
Among creation's tombs of mighty dead.

And I have rested, there above the clouds,
On rocky crags wrapped in eternal snow,
While mists like sailing ships with silver shrouds
Swept white and wonderful afar below.

I've loved thy storms at times ; for in the hour
Of tempests and tornadoes I can feel
A grandeur in the gloom of darkest power,
When thoughts rush forth too mighty to conceal.

Then, land of rapture, fairer and more bright
Than other realms of earth, I came to thee,
And loved thee, left thee, but thy summer light
Will beam in splendor evermore for me.

THE SEA-GIRT ISLE.

THE night was beautiful. No dream so calm
And tranquil ever soothed with balmy breath
The soul that sinks in sleep when toil is o'er.

I stood alone on that volcanic isle.
'T was like a vision round me everywhere—
Beneath my feet the scoria and burnt rocks
Were cindered crisp, the skeleton of fires
Whose wrath had ceased its raging long ago.

The cliffs above me hung with saffron bloom
Of cactus tropical ; and deathless plants
Clung blossoming from every niche and shelf
Of fire-distorted crags, cold now and dead ;
And at my feet extended far the tides
That sweep forever o'er the wide Pacific.

The night was beautiful. A silence slept
Serenely over all the world of waves,

Save ever and anon the roar and moan
Of billows on the reef, or the wild cry
Of sea-birds screaming through the startled night ;
Or the hoarse howl and bay of ocean dogs
That swam from rock to rock. But all this passed
And came at intervals ; and night hung dull
About the island hills.

I was alone,
Save over me a dim-seen star or two,
The elements around me and beneath.
The low, sad moaning of the distant waves
Dashing remorseless on remorseless shores,
And, wrecked and broken, sobbing life away,
Seemed to me whispers of the human voice,
Recalling from the past, forgotten days,
And hours of happiness that are no more.

My memory flew away and lost itself
Amid the shades of springtime's blooming trees,
In realms not beat by oceans and rough waves.
She met me there. The eventime was still.
Her eyes surpassed in blueness all the skies
That arch the vernal vales of Guayaquil,
And rest enmirrored where the river rests.
She met me, knew me, smiled and passed away,
And waking as from dreams, I was again
Alone upon that sea-girt isle.

The voice
Of waves forgot the gentler themes, and mocked
At me, upbraided me with jeers and scorn

For being human, not inanimate.
The weakness of mankind was cast at me
With taunts and cold derision ; and the waves
That have no souls, and rave at forms that have,
Beat wilder still upon the sounding shores ;
And ghostlier still their hollow voices spoke.
I felt the truth of all their utterances—
What myriad millions of the human race,
Formed in the mold and likeness of their God,
Live like the soulless rocks beneath their feet.
They hear the thunder while the clouds are dark,
But in the calmness of the aftertime,
They reck not that more pure the air has grown.
No storms of noble passion ever sweep
Across their destiny to end in calm,
Through which the spirit's whisperings are heard :
“ There 's nothing great on earth but victory ;
There 's nothing noble ever gained unsought ;
There 's nothing good that is not pure and true ;
There 's nothing pure and true but hope and love.”

What millions of the race of men, to whom
Life is but living, and the world but earth,—
Nothing above and nothing more beyond !
To them there is no deep sublimity
On earth, and in themselves is worse than none !
They live, but care not that they live for aught !
They will not hearken to the still, small voice
That is not in the whirlwind or the fire,
But comes in calmness after. The Hand Divine
In wide creation is through all its works
To them a mystery, a hidden book.

The waves still sobbed and moaned beneath the cliffs,
And all the night was beautiful to me.
I felt a gentleness by nature given
Come softly over me. My wayward thoughts
That had been wandering beyond the seas,
Came lightly back, unfraught by grief or care ;
And tempests that had tost me in their rage
Had passed away. The night was beautiful.
I laid me down beneath the laurelled rocks,
And heeded not the sea that roared and roared,—
And o'er me came the soothing rest of sleep,
And all was calmed and hushed at last.

When morning came, the sunshine kindly fell
O'er all the island coast, and gleamed across
A restless sea. The waves broke on the rocks,
And o'er them was a mist of milk-white spray,
And on its crest the fitful rainbows played.
The voice of chiding ceased to chide me now—
It seemed a token that I was forgiven
For all my restless waywardness.

The arch

Of seven hues danced in the shining spray,
That hid the wreck of waves beneath. The light
That breaks upon the storm-tost soul, so gleams
And hides the wrecks, and turns all rage to calm,
And builds in beauty from the shattered past,
And decks with rainbows where there once was
gloom,
That there is nothing left but peace on earth.

THE HAUNTED HOUSE OF TULARE.

SANDS are ever drifting, drifting where Visalia's plain expands,
Like the snows of dreary winter in the Nova Zembla lands ;
And mirages ever hover, vain phantasmagorial dreams,
Gardens in the air, and rivers fed by bright and crystal streams ;
Beauty clad in beauty's beauty painted on the floating clouds,
Or upon the mists of morning resting like the whitest shrouds.

In that land where sands are drifting, where mirages e'er conceal
'Neath their false and fleeting phantoms every feature lone and real ;
In that desert stands a ruin by the sands half-covered o'er,
Long forsaken and forgotten—simoons round it rave and roar,
Wailing o'er the desolation ; and a haze is in the air,
And a solitude of shadows, hopeless, cheerless everywhere.

Worn by years of storm and tempest, dingy stand
the walls and old,
Overgrown with desert ivy and with dry and husky
mold.
Latchless doors on creaking hinges swing unceasing
day and night,
As the wind through open gables rushes ruthless in
its flight.
Sash in warped and sunken windows rattles as the
storm goes by,
Hoarsely like the demons laughing when the world
was doomed to die.

Long ago, the story runneth, when the West was
wild and new,
'T was a wayside inn, and miners passing that dread
desert through
Found within these walls a welcome—weary at the
close of day,
With the lone and sultry journey and the perils of
the way.
Far and wide 't was known, and never turned a
traveller from its door,
Who had been denied a welcome in those far off
years of yore.

But the house is now forsaken, tottering ruins now
it stands ;
Tilted on its wrecked foundations, pelted by the
driven sands.
And the half-wild herdsmen passing by it in the
dead of night

Hear the crazy ceiling shaking, and they tremble
in their fright.

For they tell of voices moaning in the ruin of the
rooms,

Cries from the departed spirits wandering in the
shades and glooms.

Dark and fearful are the stories of the deeds that
there were done ;

Blacker crimes were ne'er enacted 'neath the shining
of the sun.

In the humid vaults are buried, underneath the
brick-laid floor,

Many a miner who in dying stained the robber's
knife with gore.

All is hidden and mysterious. None can tell or
e'er shall know

Who has perished at the midnight when the lamp
was burning low ;

Who at one fell blow has yielded unto death's chill
arms and cold ;

Who has plied the robber's dagger for the curséd
price of gold.

Who can tell, or who would listen ! Tongue the
truth will never say

Till the fierce avenging angel tells it on the judg-
ment day.

Miners tell among each other by their fires at even-
time,

How their friends and comrades perished in this
holocaust of crime.

Him they name who at the midnight felt a dagger
touch his face—
Leaped for life, and wildly—useless—fell uncon-
scious in his place ;
And of him who to his comrades cried for help, but
cried no more—
Rushed they to him in the darkness, found him
dying on the floor.
And they tell of many and many thus allured into
the den,
And no more among the living were they ever seen
again.

Then of her—and as they tell it, kindness calms the
miners brow,
For they love her as they loved her, and they know
she 's happier now,—
Then of her they tell the story, how she came from
far away
To her brother who was wasting with consumption's
slow decay.
In Kaweah's mines she ventured, and no dread or
fear she felt,
Seeking there her dying brother, and she at his pil-
low knelt
Till his eyes were closed forever, and had hushed
his fevered breath,
And she knew his pain was over and relief had
come in death.
Not a tear she shed above him as they laid him to
his rest

'Neath the branches of a cedar standing on the mountain crest ;
Not a tear she shed above him, for she felt that after life
Cometh peace, and calm, and resting from the long and bitter strife.

Then to her own home departing passed she through that desert lone,
Pausing oft to hear about her winds in sadness sigh and moan—
Sighing 'mong the desert thistles, moaning round the drifts of sand
Heaped at random down the vista of the dread and dreary land.
In the distance, twilight deepening, rose Tulare's House in view
And before the open doorway soon her horse's rein she drew.

'T was a night of dread and darkness. Oh the gloom and the despair !
Heaven, in thy mercy shield her, save her from the villain's lair !
Why, if not a sparrow falleth to be left alone to die,
Why was she unspared, forsaken, when the midnight hurried by ?
Why? In vain. That night she perished—murdered and no hand to save ;
And the black lamp's ghostly gleaming fell upon her midnight grave.

In the desert still is standing, yet more dreary than
of yore,
What remains of that old haunted pile on Lake
Tulare's shore.
And the herdsmen in the darkness see it and they
feel afraid,
Seeing dark and dusky spirits flit and glide from
shade to shade ;
Hearing spectres hoarsely laughing at some kindred
phantom stark ;
Hearing spirits crying, shrieking to each other in
the dark ;
Hearing tread of heavy footfalls galloping from
room to room,
From the garret halls and downward to the hidden
vaults of gloom.
Then there comes a light, quick footstep, and a
sweet voice calling low,
And they say 't is hers who perished—murdered in
that night of woe.
Then the herdsmen feel a pity as they spur their
steeds away
From the walls, and leave them standing in their
shadows and decay.
And the tempest still is beating with unceasing hate
and rage,
While the Haunted House is slowly crumbling
'neath the hand of age.
Through the air is fiercely driven sand like winter's
sleet and rain,
And a fearful desolution hovers o'er Tulare's
plain.

EL REFUJIO.

FAR on the coast of a summer-mild ocean,
Dreary and lonely away in the West,
Murmur the billows in endless commotion,—
Softly the vespers are whispered to rest.

Peaceful forever the sunshine is beaming,
Beautiful in a resplendent repose,
Mystical, hovering like visions and dreaming
Over the weary who rest from their woes.

Balmy and calm was the morning, and tender
Wandered the brightness o'er ocean and shore—
Flashed the wild sea with its trailing of splendor
Landward and tideward with musical roar.

All, all alone there 's a grave by a river,
Near to the sea, but the name is untold ;
O'er it the leaves of the cottonwoods quiver,
Round it are blossoms like silver and gold.

Loving and low in their idyls of mildness
Breezes are playing there all the day long,
Coming afar o'er the sea in its wildness,
Bearing perfumes like the music of song.

"Tell me the story, my fancy, the story,
Tell me," I said, "is there nothing to tell?
Nothing that 's lowly, or nothing of glory,
Nothing of sadness, or nothing that 's well?"

Silent is all, and there is no replying,
Silent is all as the silence of death ;
Nothing to answer me, asking, but sighing
Sadly of winds like the pulse of a breath.

Ah, but thou silence ! Thou can't not deceive me.
Never ! For thinkest thou nothing is said
In the deep stillness ? Believe me, believe me,
Deep are the words of the silent and dead.

Words that I know, though I hear not, for never
Was there a grave that was voiceless to teach—
Never, though questioned and questioned forever,
Hath there been idle or meaningless speech.

In the swift tumult of life we may hear not :
Hurried along, we may know not how near
Hands that are cold are about us—we fear not—
Life in its noonday hath nothing to fear.

But in the silence and stillness, a sadness
Steals in upon us and speaks to the soul
Words that destroy all our gayness and gladness,
Bearing us down to a shadowy goal.

Lingered I then by the summer-mild ocean,
Chafing against the lone shores of the West,

Chafing the rocks with its storm of emotion ;
Feelings of sadness came over my rest.

For, at my feet was the grave, where the lowly
Flowers were blossoming tender and fair ;
Fragrant and faint were the odors, and holy
Incense was cast to the wings of the air.

Nameless and wordless and voiceless, unbroken
Silence was there, save the moan of the sea
Mingled with whisper of winds ; but unspoken
Words had a language and meaning for me.

Know I full well that some trusting one sleepeth
Under the grasses and flowers, and low
Drooping the linden tree tenderly keepeth
Sentinel watch over blossoms of snow.

Sleeping is some one beneath the white flowers,
Well do I know, and I know she was fair,
Glad and as bright as the beautiful bowers
Bending above in forgetfulness there.

Fair—it is always the fairest that perish.
Lovely—’t is always the loveliest die.
Ever ’t is those that we love most and cherish,
Worship the most, that the soonest pass by.

So it hath been in the past of my story :
They that I held as the fairest and best,
They that were pure as the angels of glory—
They were the first that were whispered to rest.

They were the first that the shadows came over,
Shadows of night at the dawn of the day—
Under the violet blossoms of clover
They that were dearest are silent for aye.

THE EXILE'S LAMENT.*

FAR away o'er the mists of the solemn sea
I behold the hills in the sunlight glow,
And I know they are waiting to welcome me,
The ones that I loved in the long ago.

O bear me, wind, on your swift, swift wings,
To my home where the bright and crystal rills
From the rocks come down, and the valley rings
With echoes glad from a thousand hills.

O I long to fly from my prison isle,
And to cross the waves of the dreary sea,
For I know that the flowers of the forest smile,
And are blooming and waiting to welcome me.

In the eve, I know when the sun is low
Its light with beauty the wild wood fills,

* They tell of an Indian woman who was left alone twenty years on the island San Nicolas, in the Pacific Ocean, west from San Diego. In 1883 I visited that group of islands, and from the Italian fishermen learned the story of the exile. So far as I know it had never then been published; but a writer has since touched upon the subject in the *Youth's Companion*, Boston. These verses were published in 1883 in the *Catholic Universe*, Cleveland, Ohio.—H. M.

And the bright, bright beams in their grandeur glow
On the crest of the San Diego Hills.

A voice says : "Dead—for the years are long!"
Those whom I loved? O it cannot be!
For I know they are waiting with voices of song,
On the shore they are waiting to welcome me.

Remorseless tempests that mock me here,
And rave on the rocks of this desolate shore,
I can see my home o'er the waves appear—
O bear me away to my home once more!

But the winds heed not, and their wings of breath
Sweep by like the shades of the midnight sweep,
And they laugh with a voice like the voice of death,
And deride and mock when I pray and weep.

I will not weep for the whirlwind's jeer;
Far over the tide of the stormy sea
The hills of my childhood home appear,
And in beauty are waiting to welcome me.

Do the vines still cling to the oak that stood
By the crystal spring where the grass was green?
Does the pathway lead through the waving wood,
Where the blue doves play in the shade and
sheen?

Do the wild bees hum from flower to flower,
Those flowers that tremble with their love?
Do the faint winds kiss in the morning hour
The orange bloom from the plains above?

Do my kindred sing as they used to sing
Where the wildwood shadows sombre lay,
When the sea was hushed like a dream of spring,
And a silence shrouded the summer day ?

O the days are dreary and I long to go
Where the green trees wave by the sobbing sea—
They remember me yet, and they love me I know,
And I know they are waiting to welcome me.

The tireless tides of the wide domain
Pour over the beach, and the murmurs rise,
And I hear the low and the sad refrain,
The dirge of death as the billow dies.

And I look away where the hilltops glow
In the sun's bright light far over the tide ;
And my home is there, and I feel and know
That loved ones wait on the other side.

Ye wandering winds on your watery way,
O bear me along on your wild, wild wings
To that vernal vale where the young fawns play,
And the woodland all with a gladness rings.

Where the cliffs aloft from the ocean loom,
And guard the groves from the stormy main,
Where the saffron silk of the cactus bloom
Is tinged with red like a battle stain.

I will heed not the jeers and the whirlwind's scorn,
I will look o'er the waves of the stormy sea,
Where the far hills rest in the light of morn,
And loved ones are waiting to welcome me.

THE BLUE QUAIL.

IT is a vernal and a peaceful scene,
Where bloom the flowers and where wave the
trees
Forgetfully beside the blue Joaquin,
Rapt in the softness of the summer breeze.
The sunshine resting in its golden sheen
Is blended drowsily with hum of bees ;
And everywhere around and evermore
A dream of beauty hovers o'er the shore.

Beneath the trees a tiny blue quail played,
Or sat for hours and watched the river flow,
And saw its own quaint picture there portrayed
In the clear water mirrored deep below.
The quaking leaves above threw light and shade
Upon the stream that moved in stillness slow
Beneath the banks, where trailing mosses hung
To ancient oaks whose boughs seemed ever young.

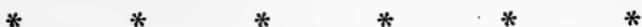
But those who now may pause to sleep or rest
Beside that river, will no longer hear
The blue quail calling. Dead, the prairies west
Extend in solitude, and waste and drear.
The grove is now abloom, and verdure-dressed ;
But in it is no voice to greet or cheer.

'T is still and lone, and one will strangely feel
A sadness like a memory o'er him steal.

I passed that way ; and from the summer heat,
Which on the plains like some vast furnace
glowed,
I sought the grove of trees, a cool retreat,
Beneath whose loveliness the river flowed
Without a murmur. Near beside my feet
There was a little grave, whereon there snowed
A shower of milk-white blossoms, settling soft
From vines that quivered in the trees aloft.

'T was nameless all—a grave without a name,
An untold history ; and I lingered there
To muse in fancy ; but no answer came
To all my questionings. And everywhere
About and o'er me it was all the same,
The same sad silence on the summer air,
And ere drew near the hours of eventide,
I took my way across the prairies wide.

Hard by the borders of Visalia's plains
That night with herdsmen I lay down to sleep ;
Oaks centuries old stood round like Druid fanes,
Above us vigil in the dark to keep ;
The earth my bed ; and there the clankless chains
Of weary limbs were lost in slumber deep ;
And memory, like a star's uncertain gleams,
Came to me then in visionary dreams.



In the dull darkness of the plain I lay,
And heard the far-off cuckoos calling low.
The moon with beauty like the dawning day,
Uprose o'er Whitney's pinnacle of snow—
Rose softly up, and threw her beams in play
Athwart the moors, like tides of silver flow,
As poets say, along the golden sand
Which mark the boundaries of fairyland.

That night the herdsmen told me of the grave
Upon the margin of the calm Joaquin,
And told me truly what the legends gave
As story of that sadly vernal scene,
Where flowers about it ever bloom, and wave
Forevermore the trees in summer green ;
And glows in sunshine the glad river far,
Trailing the gleaming of the midnight star.

In other days—in other years—they said,
A herdsman's home was there, a dingy tent,
Among the trees. His flocks by day he led
At random o'er the plains, and stopt or went
Where pasturage was best. At night his head
Ne'er knew a pillow, save the earth which lent
Him solace from his toils. Before the dawn,
His sleep was done : he with his herds had gone.

He had an only child whose mother slept
In death beside the sea at Monterey ;
The orphan boy ne'er knew her name, except
His father sometimes told him, and would say

That she had gone where plains are softly swept
By gentlest winds, and airs of summer play
On river banks all green with grass and bowers,
And prairies bright and beautiful with flowers.

The father tended o'er the plains his herds
And left the child alone the livelong day,
But came again at night with kindly words
To find him waiting in the twilight gray.
The last and latest of the evening birds
To rest among the trees had flown away,
But still the child his faithful watch would keep,
Nor, till his father came again, would sleep.

The days were long—the summer days are long
The whole long summer through. Alone the child
Played in the grove, or sang some childish song
While sitting dreamlike where the waters smiled
Deep in the river ; and he knew no wrong,
Or thought no wrong. Alfalfa blossoms wild
Shed fragrance on the winds that wandered there,
And filled the grove with incense everywhere.

He had no playmates, yet he wished for none.
He knew not what it was—had never known.
Scarce did he know that there was any one,
Except himself and father—they alone—
In all the world. The shadows and the sun,
The grove, the river, and the plains that shone
Shimmering with heat by day—these were the whole
That earth contained for him from pole to pole.

Nor knew he loneliness. This was his home.
Each blade of grass was his. Each leaf he knew.
In farthest rambles he would only roam
Down to the borders where the willows grew
Along the bayou, and the waters gloam
More darkly underneath. He wandered through
Bright flowers to his waist from morn till night,
And all the world he knew, he held in sight.

One day he passed where he had never strayed,
Where dwarfed fantastic sycamores abound ;
Among the tangled grasses in the glade
A tiny blue quail almost dead he found.
Its foot was fast in grass with twining blade
That held it, wound around and round and round.
The trembling bird was weak with cold and fear.
And cried and fluttered, when the child drew near.

The small, slight thing soon lost its fear and fright,
And nestled closely in the child's fond arms,
With trust and tameness, as he held it tight,
As though to shield it from all loud alarms.
And thus he carried it with proud delight,
Where'er he went, and kept it safe from harms,
And held it kindly ; and ere long it grew
So tame that it a fear no longer knew.

Where'er he played the quail was at his side ;
Where'er he wandered, it would wander too ;
It sang for him each eve and morningtide
With curious little voice that sounded through

The grove but faintly, and in sweetness died
A little distance off, as echoes do ;
But, to that voice the child would listen long,
And oft was lulled to slumber by the song.

Then, as he slept, the cunning quail would cease
And cuddle closely by the child's warm face ;
And they together there would rest in peace,
Aweary both alike with many a race
O'er grassy banks, whose soft and flowery fleece
Was like a carpet wherein none could trace
The woof or texture—here the quail and child
Slept where alfileria blossomed wild.

The long, long summer-time passed like a dream
Above the child who had no other thought
But his blue quail. Together by the stream
Of Joaquin's river, they the shadows sought
That mingled with the sunlight's gentler gleam,
And forms of sheen and shade fantastic wrought
Upon the stillness of the river's breast
When low the sun was sinking toward the west.

If lost awhile from one another's sight,
While playing in the grove or on the shore,
The child would call ; and low, and faint, and light
The quail would answer, more, and more, and
more,
With voice of sweetness, piping soft and slight,
Till they had found each other. O'er and o'er
Each other they had lost and found again
Among the tangled grasses in the fen.

The day was bright and beauteous. Saddest day
Of all that ever were. The trusting child,
That knew no harm or danger, ran away
Where flowers on the shore were growing wild
O'er hollow banks—ah, fatal, fatal play—
The last —'t was done ! The flowers that had
beguiled
Hung o'er the river bank where waters deep
Turn in a sullen tide and backward sweep.

One step too far—one treacherous step—'t was o'er.
The child went down even as he picked the
flowers,
And sank beneath the flood to rise no more,
And all was still. Dark willow trees and bowers
Of gloomy shade a deeper silence wore
Than ever hung upon the midnight hours.
The river lone and merciless moved slow
With solemn awfulness and deathlike woe.

Then came the breeze of evening's gentle breath
Upon the stillness, stealing softly on
Across the grove like whisperings of death—
One pulselike wave that died—and it was gone ;
Like one who is forgetting what he saith,
Even as 't is said. Until the morrow's dawn,
'T was silence all ; no leaf or tendril stirred,
Nor wing nor voice of insect or of bird.

Upon the morrow in a lowly grave
Near by the riverside the child was laid

In rest eternal, where the willows wave
Above, and cast around a checkered shade.
The winds that wander there, in kindness lave
The quaking leaves that quiver as they fade
And wither in the winter of the year,
And rustle, falling slowly, sad and sere.

Beside the lowly grave no knee was bent
In humble imploration or in prayer ;
No ritual was read with pure intent
To waft a soul to realms beyond despair ;
No liturgy of light or love was lent
To break the stillness that was settled there.
The grave was made—'t was done and all was o'er,
The child was resting now forevermore.

What boots it when life's fitful dream is hushed
Beyond complaining, where our resting be ?
The heart bowed down with woe, oppressed and
crushed,
Will thank the hand that comes to set it free.
'T is doubly blest when phantom hopes are brushed
Aside forever ; though we bend the knee
While they are with us, and implore and pray
That rudely they shall not be torn away.

Twice blest among the voiceless, dreamless blest
Are they whose narrow house is closed forever
Against corroding care. In soothing rest
The veil is drawn to be uplifted never.
No grief shall e'er disturb the peaceful breast,
And nevermore shall faith and love dissever ;

But in that silence which now seemeth lone
The truest will be first to clasp its own.

The humblest grave that ever earthen sod
Grew green above, hath had more truth to teach
Of destiny and justice, man and God,
Than hath been told by all the human speech
Since earth began. Beneath our feet the clod
We tread upon, shall rise at last and preach
Truth more tremendous, and faith more sublime
Than man hath ever learned in flight of time.

The herdsman passed away to other plains
Beyond Mokelumne, and pitched again
His tent, pursuing still his life of gains
Among the roving bands of border men.
The summer brightness and the winter rains
Came on, and passed, and came. Yet now and then
Would memory lead him back through pensive
hours
Unto a grave low hidden in the flowers.

Rough as he was, he never could forget
The gentler visions of his earlier years.
Thoughts from the past would gather o'er him yet,
And in those hours his eyes would fill with tears.
The past and future at the grave were met—
That bourne where mingle joys and hopes and
fears—
That place where memory weary and distressed
Returns in sadder hours to muse and rest.

But there was one that did not leave the tomb
Beside the river. Faithful to the end,
The tiny quail in sunshine and in gloom
Remained alone—poor true and trusting friend—
And lingered where the branches and the bloom
Above the lowly mound in silence bend
A canopy of leaves and drooping vines
Like those that cluster o'er the ancient shrines.

Perchance at times along the river side
A traveller his journey would pursue :
Aweary from the prairies drear and wide,
If he drew near for rest where willows grew,
He heard the blue quail calling, though denied
Was answer to the calling : still with true
And faithful purpose, it would call and call
From morning's early hours till evenfall.

No answer ever came. It did not know
How still in death and voiceless was the child.
It watched the river sweeping deep and slow,
And saw the flowers that yet were blooming
... wild ;
And called and waited—called with accents low,
And waited, waited, waited for the mild
And gentle answer that the child e'er gave—
Still called and waited by the silent grave.

The border ranchmen as they wandered by
With all their lowing herds oft lingered near
To listen to the low and plaintive cry
Which through the grove was rising soft and
clear.

The quail still called, but there was no reply,
Save where the river banks would echo drear,
Scarce heard, as when the voice of Orpheus pled
For lost Eurydice among the dead.

The summer and the autumn all the while
Were passing slowly day by day away ;
And winter frowning chased the summer smile
From all the landscape ; and each dawning day
Was drearer ; and along for many a mile
The plain extended, cheerless, cold, and gray,
And in the distance, far as sight could run,
The clouds and prairies bending, seemed as one.

The night was cold. A bitter, bitter blast
Of wind and rain was beating in the dark.
Torrent in chase of torrent hurried past,
Howling among the trees, whose branches stark
Rose bare and cold, determined to the last
To stand the storm, like some half-ruined bark
Braves still the oceans, though its very path
Is strewn with wrecks to mark the tempest's wrath.

The clouds were rushing low upon the earth,
And in dark billows sweeping through the air.
The night tornadoes howled with hideous mirth
Like demons in the regions of despair,
Rejoicing o'er some new destroyer's birth,
In whose wild carnivals they hoped to share.
The mists and darkness rolling through the gloom
Seemed bent to hurl creation to its tomb.

Without a sympathy for human kind,
Is nought sincere, or nothing truly great ?
Must nature's elements be undefined
Until with human and with human hate
They mingle, and a touch of mortal mind
Flows in the current, and the sad estate
Of ruined innocence be held in view,
With wreck, and wrack, and madness rushing
through ?

It hath been said, with greater truth than mine,
That not a sparrow shall be left to die
In all the world-wide wastes, but that divine
And pitying hands will shield it, and deny
It not in that sad hour relief benign,
And to its lowest pleadings make reply,
And gently shelter it from cruel blast
Until its ebbing life has ceased at last.

Thus it is said. Let us not rush our doubt
Into the face of truth. We may not know
Whereof we question, saying with a shout
Of exultation : " It is always so !
The strong are sheltered ; but in storms without
The weak are perishing, and none will go
To bear deliverance to them." Question not ;—
Believe ! Believe we must !—we know not what !

The morning dawned. The tempest had grown
still.
Its rage was over now. Its fury spent.
The sunshine softly came, like one whose will

Is love, and peace, and tenderness, and lent
To earthly forms for beauty's sake, until

There is no dream on earth but calm content
And rest forevermore, and truth, and love,
All blended with a radiance from above.

That morn a traveller passed ; and as he drew

His horse's rein, and listened for the call
Of the blue quail, as he was wont to do,

He heard the dawn-winds whisper—that was all.
The grove was silent, save that breezes blew
With faintest rustle where the flowers tall
Grew round the grave. There in the sunshine warm
The quail lay dead—had perished in the storm.

Such was the story as they told it me ;

A simple story, but with deeper part
Of undercurrent feeling than may be

In many another—nearer to the heart
That feels what blinded eyes can never see,
And throbs in nature, though acold to art—
Beats with a sympathy and love and trust
For all that 's true, though lowly as the dust.

Then, I had stood beside the grave, and felt

An awe come o'er me, though I did not know
The story then. But something solemn dwelt

About me—kin alike to love and woe.

Obeying this, the dreaming ancients knelt

Submissive down, millennials ago,

In adoration to an unseen mind

Of might and power, yet ever true and kind.

Hard by the margin of the calm Joaquin,
If e'er thou pass that way draw near and rest
Beneath the trees that wave their branches green,
And cast their shadows on the river's breast.
Enjoy the stillness of that sylvan scene,
And breathe the spirit of the glorious West,
And feel the sacredness that dwelleth there,
Rapt through the silence of the pulseless air.

Then turn away—but linger yet awhile ;
Ere close of day there still is ample time
To cross the sultry prairies many a mile
And reach Visalia's plains before the chime
Of vesper bells, where flocks the hours beguile,
And nature revels in her glorious clime.
Then linger yet awhile ; thou hast not seen
The grave beneath the bowers bending green.

Draw nearer yet, and feel the sacred trust
Thou oughtest to thyself—deny it not—
'T were better here to mingle with the dust
Than turn unfeeling from this hallowed spot.
'T were better not to be, than here to thrust
Thy better nature back to be forget,
And thou go forth into the world again,
The coldest clay of all the race of men.

Mark if thou wilt these flowers as white as snow,
That fall like snowflakes from the clinging vines,
And settle softly on the grave below,
Like wreathes and garlands which some loved
one twines

For the cold brow of one who ne'er will know
What love is worth, or how the heart repines
When death has torn away the golden chain
And left all love on earth almost in vain.

Thou hast beheld. Now to thyself return—
Bring back thy thoughts and turn them on thy
soul.
Look through thy sympathies, and ask, and learn
Where drifts that heart of thine which has no goal
Of love to turn to? Wrapped in fires that burn
Thy very nature out! Is this the whole
Of thine existence? Ask thyself, and stand
Before the bar—that doom's uplifted hand.

Shrink if the cry of *guilty* pierces thee.
Thou hast deserved it all, and more than all.
'T will teach thee truly what thy life shall be,
And rescue thee, perhaps, from fataler fall.
Build from this hour, and turn no more to see—
As thou hast done, exulting from the wall
Of thine ambition—others hurled with wrath
Down headlong as they climbed the upward path.

I stood beside that grave. It was no dream,
Though like a vision. Spectres seemed to rise
And stalk before the east; and in the stream
Down memory's wasted past, I heard the cries
Which other days had hushed; and through the
gleam
Of hope again, I heard the low replies:
“I love thee yet,” and, “Thou wilt never know
How much I loved thee in the long ago.”

I stood beside the grave, and memories came—
The grave awakens memories that sleep—
I stood beside the grave, and spoke a name,
And heard no answer from the silence deep.
But why complaining? It will be the same
Forever. It is useless now to keep
Remembrance burning with unceasing fire
That sears until all sympathies expire.

I turned away, like one who fain would cling
To something dear, but which, alas, is lost.
I turned away; and swift as eagle's wing
My charger bore me, and the plain was crossed.
O'er rocky bars I heard the steel hoofs ring,
And o'er low hills with whitest quartz embossed;
Athwart the shimmering heat of desert sands
Where the mirage unveiled celestial lands.

And when came on the twilight gloaming-time,
I rested on El Rio Bravo's shore.
In front the white Sierras rose sublime,
Away to south the plain stretched evermore.
Anear me welled a low and soothing chime
Of bells, where flocks were grazing pastures o'er.
'T was peaceful all, and I lay down to sleep
Where ancient oaks around their vigil keep.

The herdsmen told the story of the tomb
Beside the Joaquin River; and the night
Seemed lone to me; for through the shade and
gloom

My thoughts went back like fancy in its flight
To other realms. Where mighty mountains loom

In five wild peaks, the moon poured o'er its light,
And silent beams were round me softly cast
Until in drowsiness I slept at last.

THE TWO SHIPS.

I linger here by the ocean shore.

'T is the eve of a dreamy summer day ;
And I hear the billows rush and roar
On the shingle strand of the misty bay.

The moan of waves from the broken sea

Comes like a sobbing voice of woe,
And brings a sadness over me,
Like a vain regret from the long ago.

Two ships are sailing over the tide—

One sails away, and one draws nigh ;
But both are sweeping with glorious pride,
Their white sails leaning against the sky.

Sweep on, proud ship, to the wide, wide sea !

Proud ship, from the wide, wide sea, come home !
You bear no one who is dreaming of me,
And I am waiting for none that roam.

For none ? Then why am I waiting now
On the sullen ocean's sobbing shore

Which chides me, and mocks me, and murmurs :
 “ Thou
 Art waiting for one who will come no more.”

So be it, then, if it must be so :
 I am not waiting ; I have ceased to wait.
I will not cherish a theme of woe
 That is chained upon me by iron fate.

The ship draws nearer and nearer the shore—
 O the weary souls that will soon be home !
Ah, some true heart beats more and more
 As the ship plows proudly through the foam.

It flings into the air the spray
 That glows with a thousand colors bright,
Where the evening sunbeams flash and play
 In the splendor of their trailing light.

But what is that to me ? I feel
 A merciless and proud disdain
For others, and their woe and weal,
 And joy and sorrow, grief and pain !

Why should I feel, when no one feels
 Or cares for me, or hopes for me,
Or thinks of me ? My heart congeals
 Like the changeless field of a frozen sea !

And I gaze across the watery plain
 Where the gloomy western oceans roll,
And my pulses throng with a high disdain,
 Like a storm that rushes beyond control.

The ship has touched the land at last—
Hands clasp glad hands and glad hearts beat.
Loved ones look back over dangers past,
And dear are the words that their lips repeat.

I sit aside and watch the throng,
And I see that some are so happy there
That their panting lives are borne along
On the tide of bliss like an angel's prayer.

Come, wanderer, home to her you love.
You have not learned the future yet.
The sun shines beautiful above,
But the night will come when the sun has set.

Be happy now. Thou dost not know—
Thou ne'er hast sailed in the midnight black
O'er waters strewn with wrecks of woe,
With not a star to lead thee back.

But let that pass. It is not for all
To know what some must know who kneel
To plead with Heaven that there may fall
A sleep of rest till the heart can heal.

Must I be made the sport and jest
Of him whose shallow life is wound
About a shallower soul, and drest
For outward show, and naught profound?

Of this no more! The summer's past.
My memory bringeth back in chains
What should be free. The die is cast—
I *will* forget, though the world disdains!

Should I to a sinking wreck thus cling
When I know destruction is the end ?
No ! I will every memory fling
To the four wild winds, and the fetters rend

From off my life, that bind me fast,
And smother me, and press, and crush
Me down beneath the ruined past,
Beneath the waves that rave and rush !

But soft ! 'T is useless thus to rave
Against the hardness of my fate.
'T is vain for me to rashly brave
Predestined anarchy and hate.

'T is vain for me to stem the tide
Which has no coast, or strand, or shore ;
'T is vain to battle fate with pride—
Pride will go down forevermore.

A stranded wreck has left me lone,
And has taught my heart to be as steel,
And to look on grief as it looks on stone,
Yet to feel as none other can ever feel.

But where is the ship from the wide, wide sea ?
'T is here. And the one that sailed away
From the silent land, from the shore and me,
Is fading now in the dull mist's gray.

Across the waves my eyes pursue,
And the storm within my soul is hushed.
I can feel the breath of something true—
Live yet unfettered and uncrushed.

Again calm recollections rise,
And a soothing rest comes over me
As I look away to the western skies
Where the ship is passing out to sea.

Ah, I cannot know what true heart now
Sails with that ship away, and turns
Back toward the shore. Her marble brow
Is white and fair ; but her longing yearns,

Perhaps, for one whose last adieu
Was said beside me, though unheard ;
Who promised love forever true,
With a trust on every whispered word.

The ship sails on with a regal pride,
And plows the waves from crest to crest,
And slowly sinks beneath the tide
That bends away in the golden west.

I 'm left alone. The gleaming-waves
Roll far away with crests of light ;
And the warm, soft south wind gently laves
The strand that stretches far and white.

Mild evening hour ! But lone and drear
To me ; for I remember yet
One falser than a dream—but dear—
Whom I will not love—cannot forget.

Is the brain run wild that asks for nought
But to be forgotten and left alone ?
That feels what others have never thought,
And flies whence others have never flown ?

The future—were it mortal sin
To set one's faith on the coming years ?
To turn away from the *might have been*
To the *ne'er will be*, that bourne of tears ?

Is there a sleep that no more will break,
Which dims the eyes while the brain throbs still ?
And are there dreams that rise, and take
The reins, and lash and drive the will ?

Am I thus dulled, and drugged, and driven—
A dreamer on a phantom shore ?
Is that low, sad whisper, “unforgiven !”
My chiding fancy, nothing more ?

Ah, be it so. I hope 't is so.
I hope no waking e'er will be
From out that slumbering long ago,
For what is past is naught to me.

It is nothing to me, proud ship, sail on.
What matter if some look back with tears,
And plead for the days now past and gone,
And turn and shrink from the coming years ?

'T is the fate of all. Then why lament ?
Why cherish still, and dream, and yearn
For the past ? It hath at best but lent
The fagot torch to sear and burn

The fondest hopes and the dearest themes
Which thou wouldst cling to evermore ;
And it tears away the fairy dreams
Which were thine idols in years of yore.

I *will* not remember ! I will turn mine eyes
From the mocking waste of the desert sea.
I *will* forget, though my spirit cries
To her who will never come back to me.

THE MOANING ROCK.

JUST where Los Critas meets the sea
From Gaviota Pass,
I rested in the morning hours
On turf of ocean grass.

Then wild and high against the sky
The mountain summits hung,
Above the roar along the shore
Where surf a-land was flung.

The mountain cleft, from top to base,
Asunder yawned, and through
The dark abyss Los Critas flowed
To meet the ocean blue.

This was the Gaviota Pass,
As deep and dread as death,
Where winds distil their dews, and chill
The rocks with humid breath.

A path like which the Mantuan Bard
Sung led from earth below
Through shades of night and gloom and blight
To everlasting woe.

From groves along the bright Ynez
Of late I came, and past
That morn through Gaviota wild
And reached the sea at last.

As I had walked between the walls
Of rock on either side,
I heard a whisper over me—
It whispered once, and died.

Save that, and nothing more was heard.
The battlements of stone
On left and right as dark as night
Rose gloomily and lone.

A thousand feet above they seemed
To frown, and all but meet
Across the chasm. The river flowed
And murmured at my feet.

A streamer-breadth of azure sky
Spanned overhead, as deep
As ever bent above the earth
Where southern summers sleep.

From up the Pass the sea breeze came
With odors of the tide,
And wandered on like airs of dawn,
And died, and lived, and died.

I heard again the voice. It seemed
No whisper, but a moan
From caverned heights the river o'er
Along the front of stone.

'T was still again, forever hushed ;
I heard it nevermore.

I passed adown the narrow way,
And reached the ocean shore.

The morn was bright with floods of light,
And on the turf and flowers
I lay me down to rest, and dream
Away the noontide hours.

I looked through haze and ocean maze
Toward realms beyond the sight,
And thought how far the vesper star
Must trail its tender light

Before it shines on other shores,
Or kisses softly there
The occidental blooming world
All mystical and fair.

Then toward the craggy heights I turned
To mark how grand and lone
Those everlasting summits loomed
On high their columned stone.

Beside me mingling in the sea,
Los Critas ceased to flow.
Its waters mild had met the wild
And raging surf below.

The sobbing of the sullen sea
The sunken reefs among,
Came like a vain and low refrain
When saddest songs are sung.

This brought to memory again
The Moaning Rock. I knew
Its legend lore. A part is false,
But part is doubly true.

The story runneth thus : There was,
A hundred years ago,
A band of bandits harbored there,
And plundered to and fro.

Full many and many a deed of death
They did on shore and plain ;
And many and many a cursed crime
Was done for hate and gain.

They ever dared, and never spared,
Nor mercy ever knew ;
They dreamt of gold, and gold, and gold,
And pillaged far, and slew ;

Until their band had filled the land
With rumors and with fear ;
For no one knew at what dark hour
They might be hovering near.

'T was vain to seek them on the plain
With force arrayed for fight ;
For they would vanish like a flash,
And save themselves in flight.

'T was death to follow in pursuit,
For, in their rocky glen,
One hidden bandit by the path
Could slaughter fifty men.

But once, when autumn winds were raw,
And mists were hanging low
Along each rocky precipice,
As bleak and white as snow,

They heard a dismal voice that seemed
Above them moaning, "*Death*"—
It was the Moaning Rock. They stood
Aghast with bated breath.

The voice of woe was sobbing low.
Their guilt increased their dread.
They said it was the souls returned
From all their murdered dead.

Each swarthy cheek and brow and face
Was changed to ghastly white—
A breeze passed by—the moan again—
They wheeled in headlong flight.

With rush and strife they fled for life
Or death, the legend says ;
Nor halted till they were beyond
Jonata and Ynez.

Nor halted even then, but crossed
Arroyo Grande's source,
And through Cañade Del Osos
They shaped their flying course.

They passed the Huer-Huero lone,
That tideless river bed,
And through the depths of Aernal
In terror still they fled.

Till in the wastes beyond the hills
Where barren deserts burn,
They hid themselves among the dunes
That drift along the Kern.

They fled as those who fly from fear
And know not whence they fly.
They trembled like a traitor doomed
Who is afraid to die.

And never after that again
Dared one of them to tread
The path through Gaviota Pass,
That haunted ground of dead.

And still, although, a hundred years
Have run their course since then,
The moaning voice may yet be heard,
Along the gloomy glen.

It ceases not in dark of night,
In morning hours, and low
When evening twilight settles down,
And shadows come and go.

And those who pass that way yet fear,
And say that spirits cry,
Imploring piteously for aid
To every passer-by.

That summer morn I took my way
Adown the dark ravine
Along the river where it flowed
The mighty walls between.

And overhead I heard the moan,
 And paused to make reply ;—
 The hollow rocks were murmuring
 In the breezes passing by.

I took my way and paused no more,
 Till by the ocean side
 I rested where the grass and flowers
 Were waving in their pride.

While backward from the sea arose
 The mountains grand and high ;
 Their base was in the ocean waves,
 Their summits in the sky.

And all the stories of the past
 In memory came again ;
 The legend of the Moaning Rock
 In that abysmal glen.

ÁDIOS.

MY Mabel Saint Clair,
 With golden hair,
 I have told thee adieu forever,
 It is all in vain
 And will bring but pain
 To meet and again dissever.

We have parted now,
 And I and thou
 Asunder far are drifting ;

But I turn my eyes
To the future skies
Where the clouds and mists are lifting,

There is calm at last.
For the storm is past,
The storm of bitter sorrow ;
Of passion-strife
And a blighted life
With all that pride can borrow ;

With all of woe
That pride can know,
And hopes that have been blighted ;
With all the cost
Of love that 's lost,
And spurned, and unrequited.

But the storm that crushed
And raved and rushed,
Has passed away and left me
To stem the tide
Of my ruined pride,
And of all beside bereft me.

But the calm has cast
Its peace at last
Like a song of rest above me,
And why lament
With a discontent,
Though none are left to love me !

For should I repine
At this fate of mine,
And turn away from the morrow,
To brood on grief
And refuse relief,
And cling to the shades of sorrow?

For the south wind oft
With its whisper soft
Will come as I am drifting ;
While the sky above
Looks down with love
Where the mists are rising, rifting.

I can proudly cast
To the storm the past,
And the storm will bear it ever
With a rush and sweep
Across the deep
To the Phantom Shores of Never.

I will drift away
Through the mystic day,
I will drift and drift forever.
And will look no more
To the sinking shore,
To the Phantom Shore of Never.

I will drift along
Through the summer song
To the sea where the sun is setting ;

While the winds will play
O'er the fairy way,
I will banish all dull regretting.

Then, Mabel Saint Clair
With golden hair,
Adieu ! It is better boldly
To bid good-bye
With a friendship sigh,
Than to treat each other coldly.

We now can part,
And no one's heart
Will be forever broken ;
We can both forget
Whatever yet
Of loving words were spoken.

'T is the best for thee
And the best for me
That now our paths should sever ;
And over the tide
Of unyielding pride
We will drift apart forever.

SAN JOAQUIN.

GENTLE river, softly flowing, bear to sea thy
sands of gold ;
Wend thy way through waving meadows where the
fairest flowers unfold ;
Whisper sweetly, gently murmur all along thy
beauteous way ;
Lisp thy music to the mellow gloaming of the
golden day.
No rude storms shall e'er betide thee ; chilling
wind shall ne'er be near ;
Sempiternal spring shall hide thee from the frown
of winter drear ;
Gorgeous groves shall bend above thee, and the
larks their songs will sing ;
From their truest hearts they love thee as they
love the rapturous spring.
O thou fancy's fairest river ! Where thy crystal
waters glide
Through an Eden and an Aidenn and an El Dora-
do wide,
Let me linger, for the stillness settles o'er me soft
and slow,
And a train of recollections bear me back to long
ago.

San Joaquin ! How like that river where so oft at
eventide
I have strolled in dream ideal when a gleam was on
the tide,

When the evening sun was setting, and the splendor caught the trees,
Rustling restless, calmly quaking in the pulses of the breeze ;
Stirring as the spirit stirreth when a wafting from away
Steals along with beauteous sadness, but to pass and die for aye ;
But to pass in silent yearning softer than the summer's breath,
Onward to the after-stillness listening through the dawn of death.

Dream of beauty ! Deeper dreaming ! For her hand in mine was laid,
And her name the zephyrs whispered as we lingered in the shade.
All my wayward, longing spirit panting to be borne away
Out beyond the Mystic Islands and the portals of the day,
Then was lulled and tamed, and kindness soothed me to a calm repose ;
But *she* knew it not, and happy be she if she never knows.
Happier still, if never, never comes the memory of the past
With its phantoms and its shadows and its sorrows overcast ;
Happier if the blighted summer kindle not a bitter strife
In the current of existence flowing to a purer life ;

Happier if the solemn autumn live not in the after
spring,
Brushing with its spectre pinions hopes that fly on
newer wing ;
Happier—cursed boon !—but happier if the past
she can forget—
If she ever knew it—laden with the dulness of
regret.

San Joaquin ! A weary truant sees in thee a pulse-
less deep,
Where the mirrored sky and mountains, trees, and
clouds of summer sleep.
O how peacefully they 're resting ! How the azure
and the blue
Of the sky and of the mountains there are pictured
to the view !
How the verdant trees are imaged, and the clouds
are floating high,
And the whiteness is a lightness to the deepness of
the sky !
But the river, dull and soulless, pictures and does
nothing more ;
What is painted in the water is the shadow of the
shore.

River, flowing, gently flowing, 'neath thy arbors
dark and green,
Bright and flashing crystal river, still and placid
San Joaquin,
Thou reminst me—but pardon, for it is an idle
dream—

Of the silent soul of human, like thy deep and
waveless stream.

Some there are whose still existence pictures what
is never said ;

Thrills that flash along their being thus are smoth-
ered till they 're dead.

Hearts that beat with love have listened but a
whispered word to hear ;

But the word was never spoken, and—the future
all was drear.

All the forms deep in the river are to vision only
known ;

Not a whisper tells their presence, not a lisp or
monotone.—

But the theme is too mysterious ; and the likeness
of the two,

Human thoughts and voiceless river, after all is
nothing true.

One is soul and one is soulless. One is life and
one is death.

One is language of the vision ; one of words no
mortal saith.

Why should I distort a meaning ? Why should I
thus liken all

To myself—my sullen nature ? Never ! I will dis-
enthral

What is pure and fair and gentle from the darkness
and the gloom

That surrounds my path forever, though I walk the
fields of bloom.

Wave, thou vales of life, in gladness ! Wave in
beauty and in bliss !

In the fiercest of my passions I will not degrade to
this—

I will not in vengeful hatred aim to drag all beauty
down

That it may be servile minion to my anger and my
frown.

Though the world hath not befriended, though it
hath its sorrow lent

To my life, and when I pleaded for the light, hath
shadows sent,

Yet I will not dash defiance in its false, deceitful
face ;

But through all the tumult throngings I will keep
my steady place.

What to me is man and nations ! What to me is all
the throng

Of creation's baser beings swept in wretchedness
along !

What is it to me if never they should see, or feel, or
know

That I am, or was, or shall be ! I care not if it is
so.

I can stem existence. I can stem the tide of life,
and fling

Taunts to him who offers solace—who insults with
such a thing !

Human hate can never crush me ! I can hold a
higher part

Than the common herd that tramples cattle-like the
common mart.

I can breathe the purer current of the purer upper air,

And despise the baser passions crowding 'neath me everywhere.

I am to myself companion—I was driven thus to be ;
For the world has always hated me, was never kind to me.

When I sought to move in common with the mighty age of life

And be of them and among them in their labor and their strife,

They have turned to trample on me, to deride me, and to scorn—

They the weakest of the weakest that on earth were ever born !

So I rose in my rebellion, I who bow to nothing higher,

Save unto the God that giveth me my flood of passion fire !

Must I sink myself, to grovel with the low and with the base,

With the grazing herds that glory in the name of human race !

Must I sink, to make them better—was it set a task of mine

To go down to degradation, casting jewels unto swine !

Soft—I go too far. But anger kindled in me when I felt

That they scorned me—for I never yet to mortal man have knelt.

Heaven gave me as my portion nature that can
never kneel—
True to truth and kind to kindness, but to scorn as
fierce as steel.
Unto those who have despised me, 't is not me to
plead and weep ;
But I turn and dash upon them hate a million times
as deep.
And if thus I crush them, pity none for them I ever
know,
I can gloat in satisfaction on their ruin and their
woe—
If they hate me. But if kindness has been shown
me, I can turn
To the one who hath befriended, feeling all my
being burn
With a love that is eternal. That far world when
this is o'er
Will not hold a love supremo, deep, and true
forevermore.
So then in my hate and anger I may speak of all
the world,
Meaning almost all. And 'gainst them bitter ha-
ted I have hurled.
But anathemas are sweeping, and I fain that they
would spare
One from out the race of human, loved, and beau-
teous, and fair ;
One who in that happy summer, by that shaded
river-side,
Wandered with me where the gleaming of the sun
of evening died ;

One who in her angel kindness hath been more than friend to me,
True, and trusting, and confiding—in my gloom I turn to thee,
Thou who never scorned or hated, thou who never turned away,
Wearied hearing my complaining, fretting though I was for aye.
Unto thee in this my sorrow would I turn—I turn to thee
Knowing that thy heart is beating still with sympathy for me.
Never can despair be victor over him who feels the power
Of a woman's love and kindness, though the tempest-night shall lower.
Through the gloom her promise cometh, and the storm will cease awhile,
Lighted by the tranquil beauty and the gladness of her smile.
Thou whose smile hath ever followed me in darkness and in blight,
Art thou dreaming of me? I am lost in tempests and in night.
I have thought myself forsaken, and in anger I have curst
Human kind, and from them madly turned away,
 all links to burst,
All the fetters burst that bind me to my kindred mortal race.
Then I've turned again in vengeance back to smite them in the face.

But for thee I have relented—I have let my anger
die—

I will smother my resentment—for thy sake I pass
it by.

San Joaquin, the storm is over. It has dashed me
in its wrath.

It has strewn its wrecks about me, and blockaded
every path;

And at one wild burst of billows I believed that all
was o'er,

That it was in vain to battle for existence any
more.

But that gentle guiding angel came, and in the
darkest hour

Led me from the wild tornado that was dashing in
its power

Over me; while I upbraided, taunted still, and
fiercely hurled

My anathemas of vengeance 'gainst the raging,
surging world.

But I soon had sunk exhausted in the wildness of
the tide,

Going down while blindly clinging to the wreck of
ruined pride.

But she came and led me safely from the madness
of the blast,

Up again where light of beauty round about my
way was cast.

San Joaquin, and hast thou wearied with my pas-
sion and my scorn ?

Hast thou wished that night would hush me, and
that there would be no morn ?

Stream of happiness and mildness ! How thy
peaceful waters rest,

Thou the brightest and the fairest of the rivers of
the West !

I have mused and dwelt beside thee till my thoughts
are not my own ;

They, like me, alas, are wayward, and to distant
climes have flown.

And in other times and places I have been while
here I am,

Till my feelings and emotions have been lulled into
a calm.

Peaceful calm to one aweary, when the memory
feels repose,

Wrapped in soothing recollection's blandest breeze
of bliss that blows !

San Joaquin, the night is drearer, though anear the
dawning day ;

Waves that whisper, fondly name her, and my
thoughts are far away.

Whisper, whisper, whisper, whisper, while the stars
their vigil keep,

And my memory drinks nepenthe and is softly
lulled to sleep.

NACIMIENTO.

THE story in the flight of years will pass
Forevermore away, till men deny
That such has ever been. And weeds and grass
Will grow more rank where now the ruins lie
On Paso Robles Plain. No voice, alas,
Will come from out that silence to reply,
Where broken walls and sculptured architraves
Are strewn about, like waste Chaldea's graves.

And didst thou never come that desert through ?
For it is all a barren desert now,
And curst with curses more than Egypt knew
When frowned upon by God Almighty's brow.
Didst thou across that plain thy way pursue ?
Of that lone solitude what thinkest thou ?
Believest thou that Heaven will curse a land
In vengeance for the crimes of human hand ?

What is the bourne of vengeance from on high ?
Where is the refuge when the die is cast,
And unto Heaven is flung the proud defy ?
Look back through ancient years and see the
past,
Where Sodom for her sins was doomed to die,
And Land of Nile in darkness stood aghast

When Amram's son was on the troubled coast,
And wild the sea's red waves rolled o'er the host.

Where now is Tyre, whose pride in ancient times
Bent not in love or prayer the suppliant knee ;
Who sent her silver sails to nameless climes,
And spread her commerce over land and sea ?
Though high and proud, she perished for her crimes,
And from her chains no wealth could set her free ;
And nets of fishermen along the shore
Remain alone to tell of powers of yore.

Think then of this, of all these lands of old,
With all their old iniquities, and know
That vengeance hath pursued with footsteps bold
The criminals and crimes of long ago.
In memory read again the history told
Of powers in destruction levelled low,
Nor disbelieve that vengeance follows fast,
And doom, though long delayed, will come at last.

Athwart that drear and deathlike desert shore,
That solitude of Paso Robles Plains,
A waft of silence tells that all is o'er ;
That life has wasted in the tyrant's chains ;
That beauty all hath perished evermore
And in its stead a desolation reigns—
If thou hast passed that way thou felt it so :
About thee thou hast seen the gleam of woe.

So, came ye never by that ancient heap
Of broken walls and wrecks of gloomy aisles,

And arches warped, through which in anger sweep
The storms that rage around the crumbling piles
Of masonry? Save this, a silence deep
Is there forever; and a sadness smiles.
But 't is the smile that comes with lone despair
When hopes are hushed in ruin everywhere.

It was the Temple of the San Antone
Hard by Salinas, to the westward still
Of that sad river; and it stands alone
A fearful ruin now. Yea, not a thrill
Of life is anywhere; and whence have flown
Its prophets over plain and eastern hill;
And ere the dawning of our modern day
The race from off the earth had passed away.

The Temple stands, though not as in the old;
It stands as Nineveh or Babylon stands.
To earth its proudest walls and towers are felled;
They lie half-buried in the drifting sands.
Where once the strains of sacred music swelled,
While priests were praying with uplifted hands,
Are now but catacombs of mist and gloom,
A sepulchre, a violated tomb.

The plains are dead, are dead, if death can be
For things inanimate. Their life hath fled;
And nothing there the poet now can see,
Except the awfulness of what is dead.
The branch and bough of shrubbery and tree,
Which should be green, are withering instead;
And winds among them pass with dismal moan,
And he who listens feeleth more alone.

Is this a curse? It was not always lost
In desolation thus. There was a time
When o'er the valley, paths at random crossed ;
And tribes of men were dwelling in this clime
Full happily, with earnest life engrossed,
Unknowing how the penalty for crime
Would hurry all to exile far away
Where eastern hills first touch the dawn of day.

There was a priest who in the Temple dwelt
And prayed for all, and they his words obeyed.
When he had bidden, they had come and knelt,
And humbly listened while for them he prayed.
His words were low and fervent, and would melt
The hardest hearts, and those in most degrade ;
And when to Heaven he would implore for grace,
They said that light divine was on his face.

But he was false. In his revolting soul
He plotted crime of blackness like a night.
When he had prayed, 't was but to gain control,
And not to guide to paths of truth and right.
'T was wealth and power, to him the only goal
That he had ever dreamed of. To his sight
Were visions evermore of wealth untold.
He held a soul as naught when priced with gold.

Thrice and a thousand times let men despise
Those who the righteous cause of God profane ;
Who raise to heaven their hypocritic eyes,
While in their hearts is naught but worldly gain.
Their very prayers are worse than pagan lies,
And fraught with poison and with deadly bane—

May Heaven in kindness and in mercy send
Deliverance from such, from such defend !

Why should ye marvel that the plains were curst,
Those plains of Paso Robles ; and a waste
Made from the flowery valleys ; and a thirst
Of desert death sent down in ruthless haste ?
If not, then wrath of vengeance ne'er should burst
On human kind, or on a land disgraced ;
There is a justice that the world must feel,
And they who will not pray at least must kneel.

In truth 't is said, these wastes were once aglow
With flowers blooming from the sloping crest
Of hills, and in the valleys down below,
Across the prairie pastures toward the west,
And everywhere about where flowers could grow,
And all was clad the brightest and the best
That nature in her luxury could give,
To teach mankind to love as well as live.

Nor were these hills the homes of savage men.
Far from it. Here the saving truth was spread
That man, though lost in sin, may live again
By grace of Him who judgeth quick and dead.
Nor were those rocks afar the roaring den
Of mountain beasts, but flocks and herds were
led
To crop the herbage rank ; and kindest care
Was given and was looked for everywhere.

No storm of winter, pitiless and cold,
E'er blew upon the hungry or the weak ;

But safely sheltered in securest fold,
They knew not when the winds were blowing
bleak.

From that far hill, where oaks were growing old,
To hills on other hand, thou well might seek,
And ever seek in vain, for cruel hands
In olden days through all these flowery lands.

Not all in vain. For where thou thinkest not
To find a monster, there thou shouldst beware,
For thou shalt find him. Skilled in every plot
Of pillage, plunder, ruin, and despair
Was he, the priest who held the sacred lot
To pray for men. But he would do and dare
Though burning thunder hung above his head.
He neither feared the living nor the dead.

'T was evermore his purpose and his plan
To heap his coffers till they groaned with gold :
Nor cared he for the soul of child or man,
If he of wealth could get but firmer hold.
His thoughts and dreams to such forever ran ;
And in his avarice he grew more bold.
And if from out his heart he ever prayed
'T was that the way to wealth be clearer made.

There is no God to answer such a plea,
Except to smite the face of him who prays,
And seal the last and merciless decree
That leaves him to pursue his downward ways,
To plunge him headlong in the burning sea—
His conscience bared to meet the scorching rays

Of endless anger, like a quenchless fire,
Where time intensifies the flames of ire.

'T was in that time, near where the Temple stood,
A maiden dwelt. She was an only child,
And heir of all the prairies from the wood
By Nacimiento River to the wild
Of eastern hills—plantations fair and good,
Whereon expanding fields of flowers smiled,
Even in the winter days ; nor came there blight
Of frosts to chase away the summer light.

She never knew her mother. By a plain
Low bordering on a river 'neath the west,
Where waft the winds and sigh o'er dreamy
Spain,
Her mother slept the sleep of endless rest.
Above her grave the softly swelling strain
Of music floats, like orisons of blest ;
The birds are singing anthemed praise of song
Through all the summer beautiful and long.

But she remembered not, the orphan child ;
For she had never known. She never knew
How over her a mother once had smiled
And prayed with humble faith, and deep and
true,
That God would e'er be merciful and mild
In all His judgments, and would ever strew
The paths of life with kindness and with love,
And send his care and solace from above.

She scarce remembered Spain. Her father fled
From peril. And on the Pacific shore
He sought a home ; and wealth around him spread
In bountiful possessions more and more.
His flocks and herds afar o'er pastures fed.
His cottage stood anear the Temple door.
And he had taught his child to kneel and pray
Before the Temple shrine each dawning day.

Thus passed along the train of childhood hours,
And she was happy as the days were bright.
She trained with careful hands the climbing bowers
That clustered o'er the windows in the light.
Her garden walks were fringed along with flowers
That gleamed and flashed upon the dazzled sight.
She knew the names of all ; and in her care
She tended all with kindness everywhere.

She grew in years and grew in loveliness ;
And those who knew her held her more divine
Than mortal—than the angels scarcely less—
And, graced with pride and beauty and refine,
A stranger seeing her might truly guess
That she descended from a noble line,
So beautiful in bearing and in form,
With sympathy and love forever warm.

Years wrought their change in other lands, as well
As in the plan and purpose of her own.
On Spain's devoted shore disasters fell—
The king a fugitive without a throne.
The Man of Destiny with magic spell
Above the sinking nations towered alone.

The old was past away, and all was new.
The drift of tides, no mortal could pursue.

Her father left her and returned to Spain,
To seek if something might not yet be saved
Of wealth that once was his ; since now the reign
Of tyrants was no more—a land enslaved
Had torn its fetters off, and with disdain
Looked back on degradation—proudly braved
The elements of anarchy and strife,
And hailed the coming of its newer life.

And she was left alone. But kindest care
Was promised by the priest. Yet not alone ;
Her friends were true and tried, and everywhere
Were those who loved her as they loved their
own.

The gardens round about were rich and rare,
And blooming forests waving toward Jolon
Entranced the landscape, and a beauty gave,
And undulations rolled like many a wave.

The springtime and the summer came and past .
And she was waiting for the ship's return
To bring her father home. The shadows cast,
Forboded winter's coming. Fain to burn
A few days more, the brightest and the last
Of autumn days in sunshine paused to yearn
In their departing, for the happier yore—
The hours of gladness gone forevermore.

He came no more. A rumor like a blight
Came back and said that he would come no more.

For he had perished in the ghastly fight,
Amid the tumult and the rush and roar
Of Zoragoza, where, like plunge of night,
Whole nations sank in death and all was o'er ;
And triumph came upon the wings of death,
And sinking kingdoms gasped for dying breath.

Indeed alone ! And none in all the earth,
It seemed to her was left. In sad despair
Her thoughts went back unto her land of birth ;
But none, alas, were waiting for her there !
The world now held no solace and no mirth,
And no surcease of sorrow and of care.
She was alone, in all the world, alone !
And every hope was crushed and every promise
flown.

“Thy cheek is pale, wherefore so pale to-day ?”
The priest would ask her, and her wordless sigh
Would tell of sorrow more than words could say ;
And to her grief the priest would lend reply :
“ ‘T were better now to kneel and humbly pray ;
The tempest that betides thee will pass by.
Then lift in prayer to heaven thy trusting face,
And God will grant to thee sustaining grace.”

She prayed. She knelt and prayed with fervent
heart,
And all her soul was wrapped in silent prayer.
And her petition was : “ My trust Thou art ;
Be merciful to me in my despair ;
And guide my erring feet lest they depart
From duty’s paths. Be with me everywhere.

For I am left alone, and tempest-tost ;
Without Thy care I am forever lost."

One word of silent prayer in earnest trust
Is worth eternity of soulless form,
And words without devotion. From the dust
A soul can be uplifted to the warm
And peaceful light of truth. We cannot thrust
Ourselves to heaven, nor stop the raging storm.
Another Hand must guide us, and will guide.
A rest will come at last, though storms betide.

The orphan knelt in prayer. When she arose
She felt a calmer trust. "'T is not in vain
This prayer of thine. Forever unto those
Who pray believing, cometh a refrain
Of blessedness from Heaven ; and the woes
That so oppressed us can no longer chain ;
And we are free. Grace cometh from on high
To those who ask it, pleading lest they die."

So spake the priest, and she his words believed.
And truly did he speak, though darkest crime
Was howling in his soul. But ne'er deceived,
She trusted with an earnestness sublime,
And felt that much had been by prayer achieved,
And much was yet in store for future time.
Those who themselves are true are last to think
How near their feet may tread a hidden brink.

Gold, gold, 't was still of gold, and gold,
And gold forever that the visions came

Across his dreaming. Sins of depth untold
He lief would do, nor feel a blush of shame,
If his reward was wealth. His heart was cold
As Iceland's cliffs, his blood as hot as flame ;
One chilled by avarice, by passion fired
The other, and together they conspired.

Then marvel not if the avenging rod
Smote sorely on his unprotected head.
For know ye this : There is in heaven a God
Whose vengeance falleth terrible and dread.
'T were better lot to be a soulless clod
Than man denied by Heaven. The earth we
tread
Is to be envied. For the gulf is deep,
The night is dark, and blinding tempests sweep.

"Thy father's soul is lost. Alone by prayer
'T is possible that yet it may be well.
'T is possible to conquer dark despair,
And save a spirit from a yawning hell."
So spoke the priest. "Beside the altar there
Kneel down and pray." She knelt. The lamp-
light fell
But dimly in the Temple, vaguely shone.
The night was deeply dark. They were alone.

She prayed the prayer which from her earliest years
She e'er had prayed when storms had filled the
skies ;
When griefs oppressed, and loneliness and fears,
And restlessness would in her soul arise.

She prayed in earnestness. The blinding tears
Brought something of relief, and filled her eyes.
It was the prayer the priest had taught her ; now
She breathed it fervently with burning brow.

Strike ! Heaven ! Too late. The deed is done.
And low
The child is dying by the altar shrine.
She sank without a moan beneath a blow,
And all was over. Candles dimly shine
With ghostly gleam upon the scene of woe.
And she was dead. Those features half divine
Were calm and beautiful, though still in death.
None fairer ever breathed with mortal breath.

The deed was done. And done for cursèd gold,
That bright damnation which has ever curst
The race of men with tragedies untold,
Till what hath started well hath ended worst.
The priest stood silent, and, with features cold,
Looked calmly on. For this was not the first
Of awful crimes that he had looked upon,
In other nights which now were past and gone.

The fields and prairies rolling fair and far
He hoped to make his own. The child was dead.
No one would claim them now. Her kindred are
No longer on the earth ; and in their stead
He now would hold. No law there was to bar
Him from the heritage. He did not dread
Earth's mutiny ; for what he 'd wished so long
Was his at last with title sure and strong.

It was the hour of midnight deep and lone.
The Temple door was closed. The world was
still,
Save ever and anon the sobbing moan
Of winds that wandered onward with a chill,
And whispered round the gloomy walls of stone,
And passed away, and came again, until
Their murmurs were incessant, sad, and low,
Like spirits sobbing in a voice of woe.

Like Moloch standing in the gloom of hell
And gloating on his ruin and his hate ;
So stood the priest where dimly, weirdly fell
The lamplight round the altar's silver gate.
None knew the deed, and none could ever tell.
The stormy night was deep and dark and late,
And all the world was hushed. He was alone.
None knew the deed. It never could be known.

If Heaven held no vengeance in its store
For such as thee, thou priest, it might be so.
Thou art deceived. Deceive thyself no more.
The noonday light will look on all we know.
'T were easier to hide the ocean's roar,
Or smother down the winds that rage and blow,
Than to conceal a crime as black as thine—
The light through every gloom at last will shine.

But, hardened in his heart like Egypt's king,
The priest feared nothing. He had planned it all,
Through every minor and minutest thing ;
And nothing more was left that could befall.

He felt not conscience lash, remorse's sting.

He heard no voices in his nature call
For mercy—even for the dead. The door
Of human love was barred forevermore.

With noiseless work—all things had been prepared—

He pried the pulpit from the floor, and drew
The planks aside,—about him fiercely glared,—

Then, to the pit beneath, the corse he threw.
To make concealment certain naught was spared.

He fitted down the floor in order true.
The pulpit sat again within its place,
Till of what had been done there was no trace.

And finished now. He stood and long surveyed
With brutal visage. Finished what begun.
About him fell the lamplight and the shade.

And even the shadows seemed to shrink and
shun
From that dread midnight deed. But he had
made

His plans, and all were perfect. He had done
The deed at last. He stood awhile to gloat :
A guilty conscience now no longer smote.

The morning dawned on Paso Robles shore.

“Where is the child ?” was questioned every-
where.

They missed her ; and they questioned more and
more,
With dark misgivings and with anxious care.

They sought the meadows through, the mountains
o'er.

Anxiety was deepened to despair.
On hill and mountain they had called her name,
And in the valley, but no answer came.

"The child, O where!" An echo answered
"where!"

To those who called; and all again was still.
"Some savage beast has dragged her to his lair,
And she is dead and mangled!" and a chill
Of stony horror more than man could bear
Rent through them as they spoke. From hill to
hill

They hurried, scarcely knowing where they went;
And far and near swift messengers were sent.

The country all from Nacimiento strand
To Margarita joined in the alarms.
Through every copse and forest of the land
Searched troops of men in haste, with horse and
arms.

They beat along the jungles, traced the sand
Along the river banks, and o'er the farms
From mountain unto mountain. But in vain.
No trace of her was found on hill or plain.

The priest was foremost in the search, and went
Where forests were the densest, and he led
The bravest bands of men, and ever sent
The bravest of them all where panthers fled,

To search the cause—what all this gathering meant
Of savage beasts. Or else he went instead,
Close followed by the rest the caves among,
Which with the dint and clang forever rung.

The night came down, and all had been in vain.
No traces of the child were found ; and none
Knew whence again to turn o'er hill and plain,
Or what upon the morrow best were done.
With hearts that sadly beat with grief and pain
They lay them down to wait the rising sun.
The priest into the Temple went to pray
That God would still be merciful for aye.

They sought upon the morrow till the night,
And weary and despairing came they back,
And gave her up as lost. Nor on the sight,
Nor on the hearing was there trace or track
To guide or lead them in the path aright.
The darkness hovered over deep and black,
And hid the world ; and winds were sobbing low
Their nightfall monodies of death and woe.

Then came the priest and waved his hand to all
And bade them follow him. They followed him.
He led them through the Temple's gloomy wall
To inner sanctuary dark and dim,
Where fitful gleams of candles ever fall
On images in sculpture old and grim
From niches in the masonry around,
From fretted ceilings to the dingy ground.

They gathered all, and waited in the gloom
As silent as the spirits of the dead
Who wait to hear the whisper of their doom,
From which, they cannot shrink, though deep
and dread.

The sanctuary seemed a mighty tomb,
Like Memphis catacombs whose chambers spread
Where sunshine of the summer never fell,
And never sounded tone of Sabbath bell.

The priest arose, and rising bade them kneel.
They sank upon their knees at his command.
“O God,” he prayed, “may we Thy presence feel—
Protect us in the hollow of Thine hand.
Unto us now Thy tender love reveal,
That we Thy judgments just may understand ;
And teach us, lest we murmur and lament
At this, the chastisement that Thou hast sent.

“ ‘T is hard to bear, but Thou for us didst bear
All this and more. Forbid that we complain.
Forbid that we should sink into despair,
Though weighed upon with anguish and with
pain.
Teach us to feel that Thou art everywhere
A God of love and mercy, not disdain ;
And guide us in the paths of truth and right,
For we will trust Thee in the storm and night.

“ And God of mercy, infinite and just,
In this our sad bereavement stoop to hear

Our humble prayer, for we are naught but dust,
 Unworthy to approach Thy throne so near.
Teach us submission—not because we must,
 But for the sake of Him who loved us dear ;
And chide us not, if we should erring speak—
The heart is willing but the flesh is weak.

“ And for the sake of Him who for us died,
 Stretch forth Thy mighty arm in power to save.
We weep for one, our loved one and our pride :
 If she has perished, guide us to her grave ;
And if she lives, us to her rescue guide,
 For sake of Him who in compassion gave
His life for us, yet lives again on high,
Triumphant over death, no more to die——”

He would have further prayed, but answer came
More soon than he had thought. While yet he
 prayed,
Along the east horizon livid flame
 Of lightning, quivering and rising, played
From cloud to cloud. They saw. They breathed
 the name
 Of heaven’s God, all trembling and dismayed.
They saw the storm, and felt its burning breath.
The priest gazed eastward, standing pale as death.

Struck speechless now, across the void he gazed
 Toward clouds that rolled along the mountain
 height,
Where one incessant sheet of lightning blazed
 With brightness painful to the blinded sight.

All motionless the people stood amazed,
Rapt in the terrors of the burning night,
Which from the east came with unearthly roar
Of thunders bellowing along the shore.

The fitful gleam of candles from the shrine
Where stood the priest, no more their twilight
cast,
So vivid did the sheeted lightning shine
Through ponderous windows in their glow aghast.
Huge clouds along the earth in blazing line
Rolled nearer, threatening and thick and fast ;
Like doom will come in that avenging day
When earth in flames and fire shall melt away.

One looked upon the other, knowing not
If time was at an end, or if the sky
Had changed to fire, and fallen seething hot
Upon the earth that both at once might die.
All human hopes and passions were forgot
In that dread hour. And upward went a cry
For mercy—'t was a wild and shrieking prayer
Of mingled penitence and dark despair.

For even now the hurricane had burst
Against the Temple. Reeled the mighty walls ;
And he who saw might know not which would first
Be overthrown—the Sanctum, or the halls
Of outer court. “God’s vengeance ! We are curst !”
Cried out the priest, like one whom death appalls,
And from the Temple fled. The heavy door
That closed behind him, bursted with a roar,

By lightning riven. Then through the rugged rent
The thunder made, into the night they rushed ;
And cries and shrieks for mercy upward went,
Lost in the tumult where the tempest crushed
Through architraves, careened, and warped, and
bent,
And with the lightning's tinges fiery-flushed ;
And rocking battlements were overthrown
In mingled mass of rude and sculptured stone.

They flung themselves supine upon the ground ;
For none the mad tornado could withstand.
The cyclones and the whirlwinds roared around,
And through the vales and valleys of the strand.
The thunders bellowed in the deep profound
And sent a quiver through the conscious land ;
And flames of lightning lit the depths of night,
As though a thousand worlds were blazing bright,

Then passed away. The morning dawned at last
With gleam of sadness, but of beauty soft.
The playful light came stealing, and was cast
Across the valleys wide, as whilom oft.
Against the east the mountain heights were massed
And toward the peaceful heavens rose aloft.
No passing cloud was drifting in the sky
That arched the earth serenely from on high.

From fright and fear recovering, returned
The natives to behold their ruined Fane.

They saw the track that lightning brands had
burned

In the wrecked columns scattered o'er the plain,
The Holy of the Holies had been spurned

By whirlwinds infidel in their disdain ;
And images of saints were rudely thrown
At random through the mass of broken stone.

They scarcely might discern the place where stood
The altar, where the priest so late had prayed
With voice of earnestness that Heaven should
In mercy lend deliverance and aid.

All that remained was front of ebon-wood
In which were gilded panels deeply laid.
Naught else was found ; and even this was flung
A furlong off, and in a thicket hung.

But where the shrine had stood, they came and saw
The child, and she was calm and pale and dead.
They gathered round with sympathy and awe.
Her white hand rested on her wounded head.
They silent stood, like those who scarce will draw
A breath, lest they disturb. No word was said,
But stood they speechless there, unknowing why
Their hearts were questioning ; but no reply.

Then they remembered how the priest in prayer
Had pled to Him who life and beauty gave,
And who a refuge is from every care :
“ If she has perished, guide us to her grave.”
The prayer was answered, though it brought despair
Upon them like the wrath of ocean wave.

They stood and trembled ; for they felt how dread
That vengeance is which striketh for the dead.

But where now was the priest ? None there could
say.

No one had seen him since he wildly ran
From out the Temple in the lightning ray
That lit the darkness when the storm began.
Into the night beyond he fled away,

With visage wilder far, and ghostlier than
The fronting of the storm ; and in the night
A moment more, and he was lost from sight.

"No doubt," they spoke, "he perished in the storm,
And ere the morning dawn his life was o'er.
Perchance, beyond the woods his pallid form
Is motionless in death forevermore.
The sun that shines along the prairies warm
Shines not for him who lieth on the shore,
Perhaps, of Nacimiento, wherè the tide
Will whisper tenderly for him that died."

Just where the altar stood, a grave they made
For her who in her life they loved so well ;
And to her dreamless rest they gently laid
Her down. But over her no funeral knell
Was rung ; and no one knelt for her and prayed—
They knew not how to pray,—but low the well
Of sobbing voices told how deeply felt
The loss of her had been, though no one knelt.

The grave was humble, and unto this day
It may be seen, if thou but turn aside

When thou art passing through that lonely way
Where battlements lie scattered far and wide.
Some broken walls yet standing grim and gray
Have long the whirlwinds and the storm defied,
And still defy, though toppling, rude and old,
Foundations overgrown with moss and mold.

And poison weeds grow now where aisles once led
Along the sculptured halls ; and down below,
If thou pass not with care, thou mightest tread
Upon the sacred urns of long ago.
It seemeth the dominion of the dead
In desolation and in voiceless woe.
And wandering there, the dreariness will press
Upon thee with a weight of sad distress.

The region seemeth lonely far around.
On every side the trees are dwarfed and dry.
A haze is hanging ever o'er the ground,
And dull above it bends the sullen sky.
Naught may be heard save low and dreamy sound
Of winds that from the southward wander by,
And mingle with the distance faint and far
From dawn of day till shines the vesper star.

They made the grave; then turned away and fled,
And felt the land was curst forevermore ;
Nor looked behind them, but with awe and dread,
In their swift flight from Nacimiento's shore,
They followed paths which o'er the mountains led,
And left forever home and land of yore ;
And builded newer homes beyond the Lake
Where billows of Tulare gently break.

The priest fled not with them. A maniac,
No human thoughts or hopes were left him now.
He haunted forests deep and dense and black,
Where mournful winds wept under branch and
bough,
Along the dreariness of mountain track ;
While chilled forever was his death-cold brow ;
And terrified his look, and ghastly white,
Like one who shrinks in terror and in fright.

That burst of lightning through the riven wall
The night the Temple fell, had set him wild ;
And since that hour no sound of foot could fall
But that he turned, lest it should be the child.
His dreams were terrible, and might appall
The demons where the wastes of death are piled
With spectres, in the land beneath the night,
Where burning torments lend their baleful light.

And howling through the jungles of the west
From Nacimiento to the San Antone,
He roamed where savage beasts the plain infest
And tunnel deep in pits and caves of stone.
And there at night he slept a fitful rest,
Disturbed forever by his weary moan.
Nor feared he beast, or man, or God, or death,
Nor aught of mortal or immortal breath.

'T was thus for years, and he had been forgot
By all that ever knew him. Far away
Where burn the foothill cañons, fierce and hot,
In sultry summer, all forgot were they

Whom once he knew. A madman's fearful lot
Is terrible at best, and cursed for aye,
And those who never felt, can never know
What maniacs may feel of nameless woe.

The fleet vaqueros who at seasons rode
Those broken valleys and those jungles through,
At times had seen him far from man's abode ;
And they on coursers swift would oft pursue.
And as he ran, like spectre's backward flowed
His hair as white as snow. They never knew
His story, who he was or whence he came,
His destiny, his purpose, or his name.

They scarce believed—perhaps, did not believe—
That he was human—rather more a ghost—
When they had seen him in the dusk of eve
Come from his hiding-place along the coast,
And rush across the waste, where mists deceive
So that what nearest is seems distant most.
But they upon his trail would fearless dash,
Till rocks beneath would clang, and flame, and
flash.

And, though with headlong speed upon his trail
The horsemen would give chase, it was in vain.
Pursuit the swiftest was of no avail ;
He would elude them, and would safely gain
The thickets dark. And then with piercing wail,
Half triumph, half despair, he 'd plunge amain
Into the tangled copse and disappear,
And leave them in misgivings, doubt, and fear.

Thus through the land about the rumor went
That Paso Robles Plains were haunted ground.
And fear and superstition credence lent
To every story heard the country round,
Till in that region far no herdsman's tent,
Or human habitation, might be found.
Some southward fled, some east, some northward
fled ;
They who fear not the living, fear the dead.

Full many a summer in its fever-heat
Had burnt along the valleys, and had passed.
Full many a winter storm with tempest-beat
Its shadows o'er the desert land had cast.
Full many a wanderer with weary feet
Had crossed the woodland solitude, aghast
At all the desolation and the gloom
Which hung above, like silence o'er a tomb.

And still the maniac was roaming there,
Companion of the panthers, and the scream
Of savage beasts from many a rocky lair
Where never falleth sunshine's faintest gleam.
Forevermore he moaned in low despair
Like one tormented in a smothering dream.
And, at the hour of evenfall alone,
He 'd rush and leap from out his den of stone.

Though years had bent him down, yet tottering age
Had not subdued him. He would not repent.
It may be so, that he who turns the page
Of fearless blasphemy with dark intent,

No more can find repentance. Then the rage
Of deep depravity, like fever sent,
May be the burning that will sear the soul
With quenchless fire and flame beyond control.

The fate of him must be a dreadful dark
Who hath defied the vengeance of a God.
From out his soul is blotted every spark
Of human feeling. He 's a lifeless clod—
A wasted hope—a wreck—a stranded bark,—
But conscious ever of the threatening rod,
Which at the last will crush the vital breath,
And scourge the ruin down to endless death.

'T were better—if eternity is true—
That he had never lived, if he must hear
Behind him evermore the blight pursue
And rush with mercy none, more near and near.
'T were better had he perished ere he knew
That state of refuge none, and endless fear,
That deathly gloom where light is never known,
That dark despair whence every hope hath flown.

The aged priest stood on the river shore,
The shore of Nacimiento, whence the tide
Had sunken in the channel's thirsty floor,
A desert wasted, desolate and wide ;
And one might think that floods would come no
more
Adown that mighty course, all parched and dried
By sultry winds that blow unceasing there
Along the burning earth and shimmering air.

The priest stood motionless in deepest gloom.

The summer furnace glowed with livid fire.
A tempest raged, and winds like rushing doom,
Swept up the Nacimiento in their ire.

Huge drifts of sand were rolling tomb on tomb
Before the blast, and piling higher and higher,
And clouds of dust were driven fiercely by,
Till even the sun was blotted from the sky.

The priest stood there, and looked across the blast ;
And o'er his face the shadows of despair
Like depths of night forever came and past
With rack and torment more than man could bear.

The billowed storm was rolling wild and fast,
And dimming earth and heaven from the glare
Of sun and day, and beating in its blight
Along the shadows of the phantom night.

“Great God !” with hollow voice at last he spoke.
He thought to pray, but praying was denied.
His tongue refused to speak. His spirit broke
In naming God whom he had long defied.
The terrors of his doom anew awoke ;
And in his anguish and despair he cried
For death to shield him, for he could not live ;—
His doom was done ; and Heaven would not forgive.

He prayed to death and all the depths of night.
His prayer seemed answered ; but he shrunk away,

And toward the realms of truth and upper light
He raised his soul and tried again to pray.
Into his face like some eternal blight
His prayer was flung unheard. And in dismay
He turned in supplication back to death,
That it would smother out his burning breath.

Hell lavishes its mercies like its fire
To those who ask them. Prayer is ne'er in vain
When made for ruin and for mad desire.

The answer cometh soon with balm of bane ;
And in the nearer rush of din and dire,

The herald bursts with shriek and yell amain
Upon the vision of the one whose prayer
Hath called the spectres up from dark despair.

The priest plunged in the storm, adown the shore,
Into the floodless river, where the blast
Raved round him like a deluge ; and the roar
Was like the ocean where the waves are cast
O'er sunken reefs. Despair had seized him more.
He was resolved this day should be his last.
He meant to perish and receive the worst
That afterworlds can heap upon the curst.

His hair and beard, as white as winter snow,
Streamed on the storm a moment ere the wave
Of simoon dust came onward from below,
And overwhelmed him in a desert grave,
Closing forever o'er his earthly woe,
And answer to his last petition gave.
His doom was given. That moment was his last.
He perished in the storm that hurried past.

'T was years and years ago, yet wasted all
Are plain and prairie from the bluff and hill
That rise on the horizon like a wall,
To eastern borders where Salinas still
Flows onward, out beyond the Temple wall,
Beyond the empty courts where thistles fill
The spaces of the sanctum and the aisles,
And cluster thickly round the crumbling piles.

When thou from Paso Robles toward the mouth
Of Nacimiento shalt thy way pursue ;
When from the Springs of Sulphur in the south
Thou pass the Region of the Valleys through,
Look o'er the land that withers in the drouth,
And thou wilt then believe the story true.
Thou wilt contrast that realm of voiceless gloom
With what it was when clad in summer bloom.

The world may doubt the tale, but thou wilt not.
The world may question. Thou wilt not deny.
The fallen architraves may be forgot,
And in the matted jungle hidden lie ;
And over them the summer fierce and hot
May blow its breath till vines and verdure die.
But yet the story of the past will rise
Like a mirage against the summer skies.

AFAR.

I AM lonely to-night, and my thoughts are away
In a land where the springtime is fair,
Where the river is sweeping as bright as the day
By the home of Mabel Saint Clair.

I have passed through the shadows of sadness and
woe,
And my days have been gloomy and lone ;
I have thought of the bliss of the long, long ago
That has vanished away, and none ever can know,
Like a vision whose brightness has flown.

I am lonely to-night, and I 'm thinking of thee,
My beautiful Mabel Saint Clair ;
And I think what has been and can nevermore be,
And beyond are the shades of despair.

Thou hast strolled by the river this even, I know,
Where the breezes were gentle and mild,
Where the lisp of the river was peaceful and low
On the sands of the shore where the ebbing and
flow
In the light of the eventime smiled.

Then didst thou remember, or didst thou forget,
How, in the days that forever are past,

How oft at the eve by the river we met,
How often the sun o'er mountain has set,
And shadows around us were cast ?

And the stars in their beauty were shining above
From the fields of the limitless sky ;
And the zephyrs came whispering whispers of love
As soft as the breath of a sigh.

My Mabel Saint Clair,
With golden hair,
My Mabel as pure as the wafts of the air
From the far-away mountains of snow !
When the evening was mild, and the river was fair,
We lingered together in happiness there,
Till the beamings of light
From the stars of the night
Quaked in the river below.

I am lonely to-night, and my dreams are afar,
They are far, far away from me now.
Art thou gazing to-night on the sheen of that star
That quakes as it breaks in the wake of the bar,
Where the river is gleaming,
And glowing and flowing ;
And all the perfuming
Of roses and lilies,
Distilling their sweetness, and thrilling and filling
The air
With their odors and fragrance
Are blooming,
To laden the winds that play o'er the way,

And to lavish their blisses
In tenderest kisses
Upon thy fair brow,
My beautiful Mabel Saint Clair ?

Thou wilt sometime remember
When in the September
The river is silent, or sweeping, or sleeping,
And o'er it the branches extending, and bending,
Are changing to sere
With the age of the year—
Then thy memory will range
Through the ruins of change ;
And again by the tide
Thou wilt be at my side,
When the evening is glowing,
And breezes are blowing,
And songs through the silence
Are coming and going,
My beautiful Mabel Saint Clair.

But, alas, it is never. We have parted forever,
I never shall meet thee or greet thee again.
It were better for me—
And 't were better for thee
To dissever forever and ever from me ;
'T were the best for us both, and for thee it were
best,
So gentle, confiding, and trusting and true—
Adieu to thee now and forever, adieu,
My beautiful, beautiful Mabel Saint Clair !

ADA.

WHERE the willows shade the clover
In the meadows by the rills ;
Where the sunlight flashes over
Verdant valleys, blooming hills ;
There it is that Ada ever
Lingers when the days are fair,
'Mid alfileria blossoms
Round about her everywhere ;
She the gladdest and the brightest
And the truest and the best,
Maiden fairest of the fairest
In the country of the West !

Never fairer, never truer
Hath on earth a maiden been ;
Laughing eyes were never bluer,
Spirit freer ne'er from sin !
All that 's best and brightest, fairest,
Loveliest and debonair,
All are hers, my bright and beauteous
Ada with the golden hair—
All that 's lovely is united
In her smile and in her words,
Thoughtful ever, but as merry
As the singing summer birds.

What the merit in believing
That there is a fairy clime
Sung by poets, idly weaving
Fancies into music rhyme ?
What the merit in believing
That along the fairy strand
Spirits 'mong the trees and shadows
Play fantastic hand in hand ?
What the merit in forgetting
Truer life for such a theme,
Thinking not of mortal beauty
In the rapture of our dream ?

Idle all, invalid dreaming,
Vain and more than vain to me,
All the sunshine and the seeming
Over fairy clime and sea—
For 't is all an idle fancy—
Ada, thou art ever true,
Not a phantom or a fancy
To depart as fancies do ;
But a loving, trusting maiden,
Young and beautiful and fair,
Glad as is the world about thee,
Smiles and brightness everywhere.

Others have been false ; but never
Wilt thou be as others are.
Thou wilt be the same forever,
Though I wander from thee far.
Thou I know wilt not forget me
Though all others shall forget.

In the past thou wast the truest,
Thou wilt be the truest yet.
Thou wilt not forsake me, scorn me,
As my friends have done before.
Thou wilt be the trusting, truest
Maiden of the Golden Shore.

Then, remember me, forgetting
Not when I am far away ;
When the sun of eve is setting
And the shadows fleck the way ;
When along the fields, and over
Hills the shades of darkness steal ;
When the night is hushed, and lowly
Thou in humble prayer shalt kneel.
Then one thought I claim, my truest,
Thou the kindest and the best—
Thou the fairest of the fairest
In the country of the West.

THE BRIDGE OF NIHILVIDEO.

JUST beneath the glittering glaciers where eternal snows are piled
Round the summit of a mountain, rising upward fierce and wild ;
From a crevice deep and icy underneath the drifted snows,
Under cliffs and hanging ledges, there a crystal fountain flows.
And the fountain leaps in gladness down, and down, and further down,

Over floors of shining mica, blended with the granite brown ;
Playing onward, lightly lisping in the sun's serener kiss,
Till 't is lost in Nihilvideo's dread and fathomless abyss.
Where that crystal stream is welling, says the story that is told,
Once was all a glittering galaxy of sands of shining gold ;
'Mong the rocks and 'mong the eddies, in the whirlpool and the spray,
Gleamed the golden sands as brightly as the rainbows of the day—
All along the shores of brightness, and the deeper shores of brown,
Richer set than gems bedecking Syracuse's tyrant's crown.

And the long and silent ages voiceless came and passed away,
Bringing epicycled changes, spring and summer and decay ;
Bringing winter's avalanches rushing down the mountain side,
Bearing ruin all before and spreading downward far and wide.
And the little brook was dashing still along from stone to stone,
Lisping to itself, contented in its solitude alone.
Human steps had never trodden up the roughness of the steep ;

Human eyes had never seen the crystal waters purl
and leap ;
Human thirst for gain had never pillaged o'er the
shining sands ;
All there rested unmolested in the snowy mountain
lands.

But they came at last, the daring men who never
turn or yield
Till all mysteries are laid open and all secrets are
revealed.
Came they then and ransacked over all the moun-
tains wild and bleak,
Found the vein of quartz, and traced it upward
toward the angry peak ;
Traced it over ridge and cañon, up the deep and
cold ravine,
Where the dazzling drifts were lying, and no eye
had ever seen.

It was theirs ! The rude despoilers in their ecsta-
sies and joys
Saw the golden sands about them, laughed and
clapped their hands like boys.
They forgot the weary toiling upward from the
river tide
Far beneath them, where the roaring in the distant
depths had died.

Hast thou seen that depth abysmal—human eye
hath seldom seen—
Hast thou seen that yawning cañon, Nihilvideo's
dark ravine ?

Never. Lest thy feet have trodden paths of peril
and of dread,
Leading through the gloomy mountains, by the
torrent's raving bed ;
Underneath the hanging summits, 'gainst the brow
of cliff and ledge,
On the giddy rocks impending o'er the raging
river's edge.
If that pathway thou hast trodden, then perchance
thou partly know
Of the threatening terrors frowning over that abys-
mal woe.
They who never saw can never know the darkness
and the gloom
Of that deep and twilight cañon, yawning like
creation's tomb.

O'er the gulf of Nihilvideo they a bridge of ropes
had spanned,
Cleated to the cliffs, projecting o'er the chasm on
either hand.
Looking upward from the river, facing cliffs from
side to side
Seemed to touch almost, asundered scarce a half a
fathom wide.
But to him who on the summit stood, no more they
seemed to meet,
But were parted in their hate sublime four hundred
yawning feet.
Far beneath, the foam was flying like a storm of
driven snow,

O'er the rocks that vexed the river down three thousand feet below.

Like a thread the rope-bridge swayed, and seemed no firmer than a thread

Stretched from cliff to cliff across the roaring river's cañon bed.

Only two the tightened cables, and the bridgeway was complete,

One to cling to with the hands, the other for the fearless feet.

He who stood beside the river looking upward through the shade,

Could not see the bridge above him, save it by the winds was swayed

And the sunlight dazzled on it ; then the thread of silver bright

Seemed to float across the cañon glowing in the upper light,

Looking like a gossamer upon a dewy summer lawn,
Brilliant while the sun is shining in the brightness
of the dawn.

Yet across this dreadful bridge the daring miners took their way

To and from the snowy mountain at the morn and close of day.

Battlemented walls were fronting, frowning back and forth in rage,

Seamed and scarred by storms and earthquakes,
and by deluge and by age.

If the one who crossed grew dizzy at the yawning depth below,

He looked upward at the sky, or clouds, or stars,
or peaks of snow,
And passed onward to the rock-crags where the
feet could find a rest
On the column-clustered pillars of the mountains of
the West.

In the morning when the sun had lighted up the
glacier streaks,
Eagles swooped from hidden eyries, and went
screaming 'mong the peaks,
Wheeling round and round the summits. They
were angry to be first
Of the monarchs of the mountains where no human
ever durst;
To be tyrants of the wilderness where cedars
dwarfed and old
In the crevices and cliffs with roots like twisted
iron hold—
Hold with crook'd and cramped defiance in de-
crepitude of age,
Hanging there and mocking tempests in their end-
less rush and rage.

When the eagles found the bridge suspended there
from wall to wall,
They flew rushing, screaming round it with their
hoarsely demon call,
Rising high above and plunging down in gyratory
curve,
Fierce and furious to find that human had such
skill and nerve;

Beating with their wings the bridge, and battling
with a hate and wrath,
Like the jungle lion tears the snares found set
along its path.

It was autumn. It was twilight. Sunken was the
evening sun,
And the weary miners rested. Labor for the day
was done.
Darkness settled down around them, and the sky
was blue above ;
And the moon was softly shining with a light of
peace and love ;
Stars were beaming pale and tranquil over silent
rocks that threw
Shadows down along the mountain where the
ancient cedars grew.

It was twilight. And the miners in the shade of
cliff and ridge,
Rested ere they sought their camps beyond the
giddy, swaying bridge.
Suddenly the flash of pistols broke from every
bowlder shade,
And the miners fell unconscious—in eternal death
were laid.
All but one. He headlong downward o'er a high
and rocky wall
Flung himself. A clump of tangled manzanita
broke the fall ;
And he lay concealed, and listened as the robbers
downward rushed.

To secure the spoils and plunder, with their savage
victory flushed.

Then he knew the voice of Basques, and the story
all was told :

They were bandits from Penoche pillaging the
mines for gold.

Paused they but a moment viewing that the dead
were dead indeed,

Then rushed down the winding pathway toward
the camp with hurried speed.

And he heard them, and their words were, borne
upon the air afar :

*“Esta bueno ! Esta bueno ! Bueno tiempo de senar !”**

Up he sprang with gleaming dagger in that desper-
ate design,

Followed them adown the pathway under bough of
fir and pine,

Like a panther on their footsteps, under brow of
cliff and ridge,

And came up while they were crossing o'er the
creaking, swinging bridge.

In his hate he looked out at them. Not a word he
breathed or spoke ;

But he with his trenchant dagger slashed the cables,
and they broke !

With a yell like tortured demons in the world of
death and night,

* This line, in the western dialect of the Spanish, may be
liberally translated : “ All well ! All well ! A splendid time
for supper ! ”

All went down with fearful cursings, and in mists
were lost from sight.
Plunged they down the dark abyss into the awful
depth below ;
Echoes answered back the dreadful groans of hor-
ror and of woe.
Echoes ceased, and all was over ; and the gulf be-
neath was dark ;
And the rocks that loomed above it hung in silence
still and stark
O'er the yawning chasm ; and far away there came
a murmured moan
Up the steep—it was the river chafing 'gainst its
walls of stone.
Then the night wind whispered softly. Moonbeams
fell with gentle kiss
On the wild cliffs frowning over Nihilvideo's dark
abyss.

DREAM ON.

GLAD dreams and beautiful
Play round thee now.
Garlands of happiness
Crown thy young brow.
While the moonbeam softly falls
Calmly in the silent halls,
Gleaming golden on the walls,
Sleep, Ada May !

Dream dreams of crystal streams
All the long night,

Till comes in peacefulness
 Still morning light.
Dream not of care and pain,
Dream not of sorrow's reign,
Gladness shall never wane,
 Sweet Ada May.

Light wafts of fairy wings
 Fan thee to sleep,
Forms from the shadowland
 Vigil shall keep.
Softer moonbeams never fell,
Lowest whispers seem to tell
Love forever true and well,
 Sweet Ada May.

Peacefully and tenderly
 Dreams hover o'er ;
Breathing blessings silently
 Forevermore.
Wake not till morning bright
Bathes thy brow of marble white
In a gorgeous glow of light,
 Sweet Ada May.

INANIS.

LIGHTLY, softly o'er the mists of morning
 Gleams the sunlight on the silent air ;
And I know the winds that wander round thee
 Play more gladsomely when thou art there.

And my memories are stronging to thee
In that land where flowers are blooming fair.
Peace forevermore caress and bless thee
Tenderly, my loved and lost Saint Clair.

Thou hast been too kind to e'er forget me ;
Thou hast been more true than all the rest.
Art thou lost from me, and lost forever ?
Then why tell me all is for the best ?
Why have I been banished and forsaken,
Why exiled from realms of beauty blest ?
Lost ! But not forever and forever,
Sweet Saint Clair, bright angel of the West !

When thou 'rt waiting in the vesper gloaming
By thine own deep river far away,
Thou wilt then remember and remember
Till thy musings blend with close of day.
Ah, I see thee yet, as true and trusting
As an angel kneeling down to pray ;
Think not that 't is meant to grieve or chide thee,
These impatient words that I may say.

Days are drearer now than when we parted
Where that western river's waters flow ;
For thou hast been more unkind and cruel
Than thou wouldst be if thou couldst but know
How the every word which thou hast spoken
Comes again in echoes lone and low
Through the gloom around my pathway ever,
Whispering to me everywhere I go.

Fare thee well ! May roses and white lilies
Bloom in beauty for thee everywhere,
May each morning dawn for thee in splendor,
Bringing peace and solace from thy care.
'T were not well that thou shouldst know how often
I have wished for thee a brighter share
Of this world than is to mortals given—
Fare thee well, my loved and lost Saint Clair.

THE EARTHQUAKE'S PATH.

AND hast thou never stood upon the crest
Of that bleak mountain, where eternal snow
Drifts 'mong the rocks ? Behind thee, toward the
west,
Two rivers down their gloomy gorges flow
And reach the valley, far away and low
Beneath the clouds that gather, and divide,
And melt away, and go, and come, and go ;
While near thee, round about on every side,
Peaks rise into the heavens with stern and awful
pride.

Stand there, and to the eastward turn thine eyes ;
On the horizon's verge thou wilt behold
A chain of mountain peaks that pierce the skies,
So far away that every rugged mold
Is melted into vagueness. Drear and old
Although they be, thou wilt in rapture cry :
“ That is the El Dorado realm of gold
Burst in at last on vision, and there lie
The lands Utopia between the earth and sky ! ”

More near, between thee and that mountain chain,
To north and south monotonous expands
A lifeless solitude, a dreary plain
Of rocks half buried in the drifting sands
Borne on the winds that blow from burning lands
Beyond Majave ; and there comes no air
Of springtime now ; and never mortal hands
Shall raise by toil a span of beauty there ;
For death hath conquered it, and death is every-
where.

Adown this desolation winds afar
The channel of a river—long ago
A tideless path. O'er cataract and bar
The floods no longer leap, and dash, and flow ;
Dry now, forevermore it will be so.
The torrents of the winter ne'er again
Shall rush in rage ; and nevermore shall glow
The sunshine on bright waters. Curséd then
And curséd ever by anathemas of men !

From mountain unto mountain through this plain
A rent abysmal runs ; thou mightest trace
Its course from where thou standest, like a lane
As far as eye can see, unto the base
Of hills beyond the valley, where the face
Of cliffs rise up amain. This is the road
The earthquake made in its destroying race
When it had bursted from its deep abode
In nether fire, and fled its continental load.

That plain before thee was not always dead.
That river channel was not always dry.

That path made by the earthquake when it fled
Has not been there forever. On the sky
That false mirage hath not uplifted high
Its phantom shores forever. And the dust
Hath not forever thus been drifting by
Along the desert's harsh and grating crust,
Eating away the rocks by erosion and by rust.

Far in the morning of the infant world,
This plain, which now is dead, was gay with
flowers.

Meandering brooks along its prairies purled,
And whispered through the shade of blooming
bowers.

The golden vision of the springtime hours
Flowed like an ocean far on every side,
And seemed to wash against the mountain
towers ;
And tenderly the southern winds replied
Along the flowing billows of the beauteous tide.

Along the restless river's either bank
The verdure stirred in summer's balmy breeze.
Then graceful deer came down the shore and
drank,
And blue quails sported underneath the trees.
Might then be heard the drowsy hum of bees
'Mong flowers innumerable, which far along
Waved o'er the plains that rose and fell like seas
Of blooming billows. Deep the swelling song
Of birds with carol lays, now low, now full and
strong.

The river's crystal flood passed idly by
As pure as the ethereal realms of air ;
And deep below it bent an azure sky
Like that which bent above, as bright and fair.
And flowers and trees were likewise pictured
there,
And, further back, the mountains' ponderous piles
Blent with the panorama. Everywhere
Were haloed clouds that passed like painted isles
O'er mountain chains that stretched away a hun-
dred miles.

Serenely fair and beautifully grand
Was all that valley then. The far-off chain
Of snowy hills looked down upon the land ;
And peaks the farthest off were seen as plain
As those most near. For distance laid no stain
Or dimness on that scene. An Eden's shore,
Though grand with many a myriad verdant fane
As sung by bards of old in sacred lore,
Was not more beautiful, nor deeper brightness wore.

This was the Mono Valley in that age
Of youth, before the fell destroyer came.
It might have seemed an angel's heritage—
But loveliness is vanished ; and the name
Is all that now remains of former fame.
It hath been stricken by an awful blight
Which seared its virtue into changeless shame
And overwhelmed the sunshine's holy light
With tides of gloom that came like shadows of
the night.

'T was fair—the springtime breathed with blandest breath—

'T was o'er—a stillness fell—the groves were still—

A silence like a withering wave of death
Swept through the valley-plain from hill to hill !
Doom followed on and stamped his iron will
On all that fair creation. Hushed and deep
Was nature's terror ; and a deathlike chill
Passed in the wake of silence, like the sweep
Of some tyrannic hand when conquered nations weep.

The valley seemed to shrink with fear and dread.

It quivered, trembled, then was calmed and hushed ;

Then shook again, and swift the quivering fled
To eastward wave on wave—then paused—then rushed

Again. The plain, with spirits awed and crushed,
Shook like a coward. Changed was all the scene.

All beauty from the face of earth was brushed.
A ghastly pallor blotted out the sheen
Of sunshine and of bloom, and fields of living green.

A hollow moan like ocean's distant roar
Was heard far off, and seemed the dying groan
Of some vast monster crushed forevermore
Beneath the promontoried heights of stone.
Naught else was heard save that and that alone ;

But the vast mountains heaved, and sank, and
rose,

With heaviness again ; then overthrown
Again, they sank and shook with awful throes,
Then rose again and sank, and cringed with dying
woes.

At once there spouted upward flames that broke
From riven mountains, bursted from below
Unto their very summits. Columned smoke
Was hurled against the sky ; while peaks of snow
Were mixed with flames in red and horrid glow
Above the clouds, the whiteness and the fire
Together mingling in stupendous woe,
The flames e'er mounting higher and higher and
higher,
Enwrapping in their wrath creation's funeral pyre.

Then shook the plain like billows on the sea—
Like islands in the ocean undermined
And drifting off through storms in raging glee
Unto the unknown waters undefined—
Shook then the plain on-driven in a blind
And furious blast ; and evermore amain
The valley rose and sank with hideous grind
Of rocks beneath the world, where racking pain
Tormented depths of earth with tyrant wrath and
reign.

Then from the mountain ran the deep abyss
Across the valley eastward, hurling high
The rending rocks that seethed with sulphur hiss,

And roared and flamed along the blackening sky.
The rent ran east, as straight as arrows fly,
From mountain unto mountain, plowing deep
 The valley as it went, and rushing by
With reckless fury ; and into the deep
Of eastern hills beyond it buried with a leap.

The earthquake had passed o'er the plain and left
 Its pathway as it went. Its fury passed
From west to east and tore the mighty cleft
 To mark its journey. All its rage was massed
 To burst the mountains of the east, and cast
Among them all its fires. Then cliffs were hurled
 Flaming into the clouds, and peaks aghast
Stood trembling ; while about like leaves were
 hurled
Whole chains of mountain domes—the ruins of a
 world.

And ever and anon the withering fires
 Rolled flames from earth to heaven, and awoke
The thunders of the centuries ; and spires
 Of livid heat from out the craters broke,
 Mixed with ten thousand hills of billowed
 smoke ;
Till glaciers, clouds, and flames were blended all
 The orient heavens under, like a cloak—
A shroud of blackness—stretching as a pall
On the horizon's verge—a flaming, fiery wall.

Then all the valley and the peaks of snow
 On either side afar were hid from view

In smoke that from the heavens settled low,
Concealing all the fields of azure blue,
And darkening on the earth which vaguer grew,
Until in midnight darkness sank from sight
The agony of elements, and threw
A mantle o'er its suffering. The light
Was past away, and morn was changed into the
night.

A stillness came. The fires had sunk to rest
Into the yawning earth and ceased to roar
Along the reeling mountains of the west,
And rocks were heard to grate and grind no
more
Below the world. The earthquake storm was o'er,
And nature had grown calm. Then slowly rose
The smoke and cleared away from all the shore—
Rose slowly up, as loathing to disclose
The valley's ruined fields and desolation's woes.

When clouds had cleared away and light returned,
The plain extended as a blasted heath.
The conflagration had swept o'er and burned
All life away. Still hung in many a wreath
The smoke about the snowy domes. Beneath,
A blackened waste was all. The gaping chasm
Across the valley ran like jagged teeth
And yawning jaws, distended in a spasm
Of rage to mold the earth in that Plutonic plasm.

That river beautiful, the Mono bright,
No longer flowed along its flowery way.

Its banks were withered by the deadly blight,
And all its shores were shrunk to shrivelled clay.
Its waters were dried up ; and ashes lay
Where once had sparkled down the crystal stream,
In gladness dancing through the light of day ;
And all was limned in lurid, lonely gleam
Like drear, unfriendly shores as pictured in a dream.

The verdure and the flowers had ceased to be ;
Yet stood about in dread and gloomy pride
The branchless trunks of trees—though many a tree
Had fallen in the storm—yet some defied
The elements and stood—although had died
All verdure and all beauty ever there.
The waste extended out on every side
As far as eye could reach, and everywhere
One panorama vast of ruin and despair.

Then stand with me upon the mountain crest
'Mid century snows, and toward the east behold
The Mono Valley far below, and dressed
In the same ruin that the earthquake rolled
Across it in the ancient times and old.
Thou art above the cedars and the pines.
The wind about thee bloweth bleak and cold,
Although 't is summer-time and brightly shines
The sun on sparkling snow like shores of crystal
mines.

But heed this not ; 't is splendid to be here
And feel that all the world is 'neath thy feet ;
The sky above thee bending pure and clear,

And at thy side the earth and heavens meet.
Thou art alone with me in this retreat,
Which is not loneliness, though high above
The summer's sweltering noons and torrid heat.
We are alone ; and not the tireless dove
Can soar to us or bring its soothing coo of love.

We are alone. Think not there is no throng
To storm along thy pulses as we stand
Beyond the gaze of human, and the song,
And words, and jargons, and the waving hand
Of soulless multitudes who crowd the strand
Along life's lower plains, and unaware
What beauty is above them where expand
The purer worlds.—Think not, for we can share
The spirit of creation round us everywhere.

The Mono Valley reaches like a dream
Before us, down immeasurably below.
We trace the journey of its ancient stream
Whose waters ceased their flowing long ago.
That mighty chasm whose depth we cannot know
We yet can trace until it shuns the eye
Beneath the far-off eastern hills of snow
Whose summits pinnacled arise on high,
And pierce with dazzling white the azure of the sky.

Mark well along the valley how the path
The earthquake made yet scars the glimmering
plain,
And lines the flight of subterranean wrath,
Running afar a treacherous, sunken lane,

A deep, a geological Ohain
Across a waste and desert Waterloo,
Where all the valley's loveliness was slain,
And beaten back, and burnt ; and all that grew
Was trampled down by that which tortured as it
slew.

But what is all of that to thee and me ?
'T is naught to us if still the plain is dead.
Upon the mountain height we stand to see
On our one hand the wasted prairie spread,
And on the other, far along the thread
Of silver rivers toward the sinking west,
Are pasture lands where herds and flocks are
led,
And where, at noon, in groves they sleep and rest—
A land of loveliness, a land of beauty blest.

Down toward the west is this, but far away ;
So far that vision nothing can discern,
Save plains outspreading in the light of day,
And the slight silver threads where rivers turn,
One toward the Golden Gate, one south toward
Kern
And meets Tulare's Lake, whose waters flow
In restless waves o'er sandy shores that burn
With arid heat—the lake in light aglow,
A hundred miles away, ten thousand feet below.

Drear Mono Valley ! Death is on thy brow !
Fair Joaquin Valley, like a paradise !
Drear Mono, life with thee is over now !

Fair Joaquin, blooming under summer skies !
To thee afar away I turn mine eyes
And call thee Beautiful, and stretch my hand
Down toward thee, feeling pride and passion rise
Through all my nature ; and I feel the band
That binds me unto thee, thou dreamer's dreaming
land !

But, Mono, tenderness for thee I feel ;
I feel a sympathy for thy distress.
Fain would I turn away the cursèd seal
That binds thee to thy doom of dreariness.
Thou once wert fair and proud in gorgeous
dress
Of foliage and roses, ere the flame
Of doom destroyed. I cannot curse or bless—
I will not curse thy misery and shame ;
I cannot bless—thy name is but an empty name.

A name, though beautiful, is naught to me
Unless it meaneth something more than dust.
No gentleness and truth can ever be
Without a soul of kindness, love, and trust.
Thy plains are dead and drear, a grating crust
Of tasteless salt. Then get thee to thy own,
And nevermore into my presence thrust
Thy rude deformities—remain alone
In thy despair, and mourn thy beauty that is flown.

Ye winds that blow eternally and blow
Forevermore along the treeless heights
Of pinnacles and domes where ice and snow

Have drifted through a thousand years of nights,
I come to dwell with ye and your delights
Awhile, for there is something in the wild
And curbless winds that softens and requites
My nature's sullen elements, beguiled
By erring vistas which have tempted and reviled.

I came to ye, ye winds whose wings along
The crags of ice a-rushing I can hear
Above me and around me, brave and strong,
And far away, and nearer and more near.
I feel akin to ye. Ye are not drear.
And I can linger here for days alone ;
Yea, linger till the days shall round the year,
And mix my waywardness with all your own,
And feel how trust and truth have ever stronger
grown.

In solitude there comes a soothing calm
That buries memory of things that were,
And o'er our errors settles like a balm
To heal the soul that suffers in despair.
The heart's complaining, whispering but of care,
Is lulled to sleep ; and holier thoughts arise
And unto higher plains our spirits bear,
And bring a slumber over weary eyes,
And give us peace awhile that comes from paradise.

But what is peace to me ! I scorn at peace !
When I am left alone in solitude
The chidings of my memory never cease
Upbraiding me for phantoms I 've pursued.

For I have erred ; and nothing but to brood
In sullen spite will bear me through the storm,
Still urging me to darker, darker mood,
While all my nature marshals into form
My cold, eternal hate, my love that still is warm.

Still warm, although betrayed and spurned to
earth—

'T were better had I turned about and curst
That falsest of all false ! There was no worth—

There was no any thing that 's good—the worst
Of all my enemies—she was the first
To leave me in the hour of need—conspire
To work my overthrow, till like a thirst
That knows no quenching, burns the smothered fire
Within my soul—I 'll fling to earth my gentle lyre—

I 'll join with earthquakes and the tumult wild,
That fierce confusion which will stifle care.

I cry *peccavimus* that I have smiled
For one so false, so fleeting, and so fair—
I 'll fling away the past with its despair,
Back to its chaos ; and then I will turn
From all my aberrations, and will there
Build up again. For I at least can learn
From what has been, what themes will soothe and
what will burn.

But why thus rave and bluster with the world
And with its tyranny ? 'T is worse than vain.
It can o'erpower me, for it hath hurled
Me down already, manacle and chain

Hath fettered on me till the burning pain
Is racking ; and I have nowhere to flee.

Why should I not rebel ! Why not disdain
Submission while a hope I yet can see—
I 'll tear my fetters off—I can, I will be free !

Yea, free ; though burnt and riven like that plain
Before me as I stand—be free—once more—
Though passions have consumed me as the reign
Of earthquake fires consumed the Mono shore.
Its blasted ruins nothing can restore.

Deep trenches through my nature mark the rage
Of my ambition. But the storm is o'er ;
And I, although a youth, am bent with age
And enter thus upon my fated heritage.

A heritage of deep, unbending pride
That kneels to nothing, and would sooner die
Than ask forgiveness ; and when once denied
Asks nothing ever after, nor reply
Deigns give to one who ever durst deny
A favor asked. To such a soul I 'm chained ;
And all my destiny is to defy
The will and wish of others who have feigned
To be my friends, then turned, betrayed me and
disdained.

But soft ! Perhaps all yet may not be lost ;
And love may not be all in ruins yet.
I have been turned adrift, and tempest-tost,
And I have seen my brightest summers set,
But there is something I cannot forget

Comes whispering down my memory. I feel
A flush from out the past where I have met
My life's one idol, and my musings steal
Back through the shadow shores that all the past
reveal.

O Passions ! Nature ! Tempests ! Mingled all !
I am the prey of all. I cannot turn
To heaven or earth, but that a voice will call
And chide me or upbraid me, curse or spurn,
Or wake my recollections till they yearn
For hours which are no more,—the youthful years,
When hope was bright because it yet must learn
The cost of wisdom and the price of fears,
And what the world is like when seen through
blinding tears.

I wake from dreams. I on the mountain stand
'Mid snows eternal. 'T is the evening hours.
The Mono Valley's drear and wasted land
Lies to the east, scarred by the earthquake
powers ;
To west Madera's boundless fields of flowers
Roll off to vision's bourne. I am alone
Amid the mountains wild, and snowy towers,
And they have claimed my nature for their own—
Too true ! I am of ice, and fire, and storm, and
stone !

Like fire and storm, I cannot bear control,
My curbless passions, love, and scorn, and hate,
Rush like tornadoes round my stranded soul
And bear me onward to impending fate.

But, motionless as stone, I stand and wait,
Nor kneel, nor ask for peace, nor plead ; nor cry,
“ It is enough ! I yield ! Your wrath abate ! ”—
Yea, sooner than to yield, I ’ll stand and die,
And to the last will hate and to the last defy.

But, peace ! Why will I to the last contend
With foes unworthy me ? It is not well
That I, a man, should stoop and condescend
To lower levels, merely to rebel
Against what there I find. I will not dwell
In such indignity. I ’ll take my way
Down from this summit, over cliff and fell ;
For night forbids that I should longer stay
On this bleak mountain height. Low sinks the sun
of day.

I wake as from a sleep. The eve declines.
And, as my life warms through my being, I
Search out my path, descend where ancient pines
Grow far beneath ; and glades and meadows lie
Around the river source. Then I descry
The snowy summits where I stood of late
Rise o’er me gloomy, terrible on high,
Embattled in their everlasting hate,
Tremendous in their power of all that ’s grand and
great.

MABEL SAINT CLAIR.

IN the far-off summer land of light,
Where the winds are soft and fair,
Where the dewdrops cluster on lilies white,
With a peaceful rest in the silent night,
Is the home of Mabel Saint Clair.

'T is a summer shore and a crystal strand,
And the whispering river flows,
And the waves are washing the silver sand,
And the orange groves afar expand
Like the dreams that are dreamed in fairy land
And only the dreamer knows.

Is the home still there of my Mabel Saint Clair
As in days that are passed away ?
Is her sweet song heard when the morning fair
Is flushing with splendor everywhere ?
Do the winds that come and the whispering air
Breathe gently and tenderly, "Mabel Saint Clair,"—
Sweet Mabel, my lost for aye ?

Ah, far, far away, far away is she now,
And we have parted to meet nevermore,
But still at the eventime roses will bow,
When the breeze from Yo Semite kisses her brow
As she lingers alone by the shore.

She 'll remember me then, I know, when the gleam
 Of the stars shall come down from the sky,
And shall fall on the river's unmurmuring stream,
On the shore with its shadows that slumber and
 dream,
And are stirred by the breath of a sigh.

'T is a beautiful, beautiful, beautiful shore,
 And again I seem to be there,
Where the cold and the drear of the winter is o'er,
And the tempests are gone with their rushing and
 roar,
And the bright flowers bend with their bloom
 evermore
At the feet of Mabel Saint Clair.

Then, Mabel, remember—I will not forget,
 Though my memory bringeth but pain.
Thy parting adieu was the tenderest yet—
For the last time on earth we have parted and met—
The suns that were brightest forever have set—
 It is vain—it is vain—it is vain !

It is vain—it is vain. We have parted forever,
 And deserts between us are barren and dreary.
Eternity's cycles can never dissever,
Or drive us asunder—a-drifting—no, never—
 Though driven and tempted and hopeless and
 weary.

THE RING.

THE ring you gave me for a while,
I 've kept and still am keeping ;
It bids me think of you by day,
And dream of you while sleeping.

And this is really, truly nice,
As nice as it can be ;
I like the ring, indeed I do,
Because you gave it me.

But then—ah, here 's the saddest part—
I must return the ring ;
You said that I must bring it back
On the first day of spring.

I said I would, and so I will,
Just as I said, I 'll do ;
I 'll bring the ring at first of spring
And give it back to you.

But, there 's a question I would ask ;
As sure as sky is blue,
The ring 's so tight 't will not come off—
Now, what are you to do ?

The ring is yours, and spring is here,
But I can't understand
How you can ever get that ring,
Unless you take my hand.

ELESIE DEL QUAMADA.

WHERE the trees are green,
By the river side
And the ocean's waves are near and drear,
Is a lovely scene,
And a dream of pride,
For the sky above is ever clear.

In that grove of trees
A maiden dwells,
Hard by Quamada's playful tide ;
And the ocean breeze,
Like a chime of bells,
Comes over the water waste and wide.

When thou shalt pass
That summer dream,
Elesie del Quamada's home,
Where the blooming grass
And the morning gleam
Shall tempt thee there to cease to roam,

Remember well
That I was there,
And on that shore of shell and sand,

The debonair
And proud and fair
Elesie led me by the hand.

Five blooming years
Had passed away
Since first she saw the world of flowers.
Too glad for tears,
Too proud for play,
She watched the sea the summer hours.

She led me down
Where the waves were wild,
And told me of the rocks and trees,
And the boulder's brown,
Together piled
Along the ledges, reefs, and keys.

The suns of France
And the suns of Spain
Had kissed her brow, though yet so young ;
And from the glance
And the proud disdain
Of her night-dark eyes her soul was flung.

Her home was far
From the passing throng
On a dreary coast, almost unknown,
And over the bar
The waves' hoarse song
Was ever rising drear and lone.

A few green trees
By the river side
Bent over the cottage where she dwelt,
And in the breeze
From the ocean wide
They waved when the breath of air they felt.

I lingered there
In the morning hours,
And with her strolled beside the sea,
For the day was fair,
And the few wild flowers
That bloom, were blooming on the lea.

Then I passed away,
And she said adieu,
With *au revoir* and *á dios* ;
And the sun of day
Sank in the blue
Of waves, and the night air hovered close.

'T was long ago,
But often yet
I think how lonely she must be
Where the billows flow
Like a sad regret
From the ancient sorrow of the sea.

And the darker night
With deeper gloom
Makes all the ocean lonelier seem,
Till the morning light

On the shores of bloom
Is flashing bright
With a deeper gleam,
And the ocean's might,
And the playful stream
Flow ever like a changing dream.

KAWEAH.

K NOW ye where the dark Kaweah dashes
through abysses deep ;
Where no flower was ever blooming, and no wil-
lows ever weep ?
Where the rocks and crags impending rise like
ruined cities rise,
Desolate and cold and lifeless from the desert to
the skies ?
Not a sound of human whisper breaks that solitude
of woe,
Where the flapping wings of eagles on the stillness
come and go.
And the shades like famished spectres glide from
rock to rock in gloom,
And aloft in clouds and tempests high the frowning
mountains loom.

Death ! It is the dread dominion where there
nothing is but death.
Nature there created monsters but denied them
living breath,

Dragons with cold, stony faces, molded by volcanic fires,
Grin and frown in horrid vagueness from their ancient funeral pyres.
Torrents from the hidden caverns, bursting forth in foaming white,
Roar and roar and roar eternal through the deep abysmal night.

Into that Eidolon Valley who would dare his way to tread?

Who would cross those unknown borders where no pathway ever led?

Gold! That siren song was singing. Hands were painting beauteous dreams

For the sleeper. Sands were flowing. Golden sands in murmuring streams.

In the depths of dark Kaweah there were toiling all alone

Two rough miners; and about them heaps of gold were all their own.

They that realm had penetrated and had found the dream was true.

In the sands of mountain torrents gold was bubbling up to view.

All alone they toiled and labored hoarding up the wealth untold;

Winter's storms, and suns of summer saw the growing heaps of gold.

Human footsteps, none came near them; none approached them toiling there.

Beetling, overhanging mountains walled around them everywhere.

There they toiled for years ; still hiding in a cavern dark and deep,

All their gold, still rolling o'er it rocks in huge and rugged heap.

'T was enough. Their work was over. In the sands the wealth untold

Still was hidden ; but no longer would they wash the drifting gold.

In the deepening shades of evening, by their cavern's darker door,

Sat the miners, worn and haggard, talking all their future o'er.

And the past came up before them, and they lived it once again ;

But they dwelt upon the future seen with fancy's brightest ken,

They had toiled, but rest was coming. Peaceful days would dawn at last.

Disappointments would be ended, every care within the past.

With their store of wealth, declining life would yield them pleasure yet.

Days would dawn, and at the dawning they could all the past forget.

They had spent their days together from their boyhood when they played

By the bright blue Juniata in the quivering chestnut shade.

They would buy the ancient cottage, childhood's
home beneath the trees,
And as peaceful as the river, life would pass in rest
and ease.

Thus as fell the evening shadows talked they of
the future blest,
And when darker night came o'er them, on their
couch they sank to rest.

Lone the night hung, dark and dreary, and one all
unconscious slept,

But one waked, and thoughts infernal through his
brain like phantoms swept.

Night's domain of humid blackness was as day to
the design

Which he pondered : " All this treasure might be,
can be, must be mine ! "

All, it must be his. His comrade slept, and
dreamed perhaps of one

Long forgot, except in dreaming—But—a groan—
his dream was done !

He was dead. For thrice a dagger had been
plunged into his heart.

But a groan, a gasp, a shudder, and a quick con-
vulsive start,

And the dying man extended his rough hand and
called, and felt

For his comrade who was silent and who like a
coward knelt,

Hiding 'neath the rocks that shelving met the cav-
ern's stony floor,

Trembling when the gasping ended and he knew
his work was o'er.

It was o'er. A murderer standing in the dark before the cave
Heard beneath him waters dashing, heard above the night-winds rave.
And an awful shudder shook him, and he turned to flee for aid
To the cave again, but shrinking, he drew back and felt afraid.
Down the gorge the winds of midnight hoarsely howling blustered by,
And the clouds of deeper blackness wildly swept across the sky.
Then in fear the coward trembled, and he knew not where to go,
While the dreary dark was dragging desolate away and slow.

When the morning late and lonely came and brought the autumn day,
Down Kaweah's rugged valley slow the murderer took his way.
All the gold he left behind him in the cavern buried deep
And untouched ; and there his comrade lay in death's eternal sleep.
Murderer flying from the crying voice that late had called for aid !
Murderer shrinking when the phantoms seemed to wave a bloody blade !

All the world lay blank before him like a half-forgotten dream.

"Murderer," winds and billows murmured : "Murderer," lisped the mountain stream.

At the midnight, voices echoed back the murmurs, and the air

O'er him and around repeated the same murmurs everywhere.

Over every land and nation like a one who flies and flies,

Hurried, haunted, chased, and driven toward a goal that earth denies,

So he fled o'er isles and oceans, seeking refuge evermore

From the fiends that yelled behind him, coming like a tempest roar.

Years and years their length had numbered, and the murderer wandered yet,

Chilled and numbed by icy winters, scorched by suns that never set.

In the cañons of Kaweah fell the evening's dreary shades ;

And the world grew vague and dimmer like mirage of morning fades

In the noonday. Then there wandered slowly up the rugged glen

One who seemed to seek for refuge from the homes and haunts of men.

Tottering frame and failing footstep, hair as white as winter snow

Told him agéd, and about him hung a mystery of woe.

Like a ghost among the shadows silently along he past,

Bent by age as with a burden, and beneath it sinking fast.

In the low and gloomy doorway of a cavern dark and lone,

Overhung by threatening mountains and half hid by heaps of stone ;

By that doorway stood the stranger, peering vaguely through the dark,

Where a skeleton before him lay disjointed, still and stark,

Torn by wolves, and half devoured ; and from the grottoes in the stone,

All untouched by hand of human wealth of gold untarnished shone.

Long he stood like stony statue, him, that haggard, aged man,

While his thoughts in swift remembrance like a deluge backward ran.

Mournfully the winds were murmuring 'mong the shelving crags on high,

Mingling murmurs with the dashings of the torrents rushing by.

Night was brooding, and the darkness gloomily and deeper fell,

And the beasts of prey in hunger filled the rocks with scream and yell.

From the cavern's darkened doorway turned the murderer worn and slow,
Heeding not the storms above him, nor the angry flood below.
And he passed into the darkness up the wild and rocky glen,
While the night came swiftly downward, and he ne'er was seen again.

BONNIBEL DE LA SANTA YNEZ.

IF the world were as fair and as lovely as thou,
and the morrow no shadows of sorrow should bring,
It would be but in vain to look ever beyond, for the time would be all as a beautiful spring.
And the ice of the winter and fever of summer would be as a memory lost in the past ;
And the sadness of autumn, unfear'd and forgotten, no longer its dreariness o'er us would cast.

I have met thee, fair maiden of Santa Ynez, by that whispering river that murmurs and flows
From the land of the south, 'neath the oak and the willow that wave when the breeze of the morning-time blows.

I have met thee and loved thee—thou knowest it truly—I speak to thee true—I will ever be true—

I have wondered if Eden at dawn of creation, with heaven above it unclouded and blue—

I have wondered if Eden with rivers of crystal that
flowed where the lilies were bending in prayer
In their deep adoration and worship and beauty,
and moving in calmness in waves of the air—
I have wondered if Eden where music was deepest,
where all that was deepest was lulled to repose
In rapture of dreaming and wonder of loving, when
the zephyrs were soft as the breath of a rose—
When I met thee, fair maiden of Santa Ynez, then I
wondered if Eden in years of the eld,
A maiden as fair and as lovely as thou, in the prime
of its summer celestial held.

Not Eve in the spring of her life and her beauty
was lovelier, fairer, or gentler than thou ;
And the love and the bloom of her youth was no
deeper than the love and the bloom on thy
beautiful brow.
In her soul was the wealth of the love and the kind-
ness which since o'er the earth have been scat-
tered afar
To her daughters, the truest, the fairest, and pure-
est, where'er they have been and wherever
they are.

But to thee, gentle maiden, to thee hath been given
a rapture of feeling surpassing them all ;
And a rapture of beauty, and rapture of gladness—
Oh ! a fortune like thine is shall nevermore
fall—
It shall nevermore fall to the lot of a mortal. Tell
me not, then, I have loved thee too well ;

For the depth of my dreaming, my depth of emotion, the depth of my nature, thou only can tell.
It is vain. It is vain. We have met and have parted, have parted for ever and ever.
Adieu!

We have met, and have loved, and have severed forever ; but my heart unto thine shall forever be true.

When the years of the future shall bear me, and leave me, a-drift or a-wreck on the sea or the strand ;

Then my memory will wander, and seek thee, and find thee, as I found thee to-day in the summer-deep land,

As I found thee to-day by the murmuring river, where the oaks and the willows were waving above

In the soft winds of morning that came from the ocean, and wandered away with a whisper of love.

I will crown thee with roses, my memory will crown thee, as to-day I have crowned thee the queen of my heart ;

And thy brow shall be gay with a garland of lilies, whose bloom and whose beauty shall never depart.

And the beat of thy pulse shall be glad ; I will tell thee a story of love as I told thee to-day,

When thy hand was in mine, and thou trembled with gladness, for thy soul with emotion was carried away.

Then the lisp of the river, the whisper of breezes,
seemed kindred to us as we wandered alone
By the Santa Ynez, where the sun of the morning
with a flooding of rapture and ecstasy shone.

O the morn and the hour and the moment that
blessed us ! O the river!—there 's nothing
more wondrous to me

Than a whispering river in calmness and softness—
I lingered alone by that river with thee.

O the river!—Thy love was as deep as the river, as
calm as the river, as pure as the stream

Which the river bore on through the light and the
shadows, the dark of the shade and the bright
of the gleam.

Even so was thy love ; for thine hand I was press-
ing, and I felt how thy spirit was flowing to
mine,

Like the tide of a river that flows to a river, and
mingle together, my spirit and thine.

And the warmth of thy nature was like the deep
springtime, all rapture, and passion, emotion,
and love ;

As pure as the dawn in the Garden of Eden, as
pure as the dreams of the angels above.

O maiden of Santa Ynez, I have loved thee ; I have
told thee I loved thee ; thou answered me low,
Thou answered me, saying : “ I love thee more
fondly than ever this world in its coldness can
know.”

And then why have we parted ? The river still
whispers beneath the green banks, and the
willows still wave,

And the flowers will blossom and wither and perish, where the breezes still wander and tenderly lave.

And the sky is still deep with the fervor of summer, and the hills of the south in their beauty still rise ;

But all beauty besides is as naught to thy beauty, and the azure is pale to the blue of thine eyes.

It is useless and vain that the world should e'er fathom the deep of thy mystery—let it go by ;
We have parted forever. Let mystery darken all else till the day and the hour that we die.

But my fair Bonnibel of the Santa Ynez, while thy true heart shall beat thou wilt never forget,

Thou wilt think of the past and wilt call it a dream, ere thou learned of the dulness and care of regret ;

For thou knew it not then, and no shadow of sorrow had ever come over thy morning of life ;

Not a grief had oppressed thee, no promise been broken, no darkness come o'er thee with gloom and with strife.

O my sweet Bonnibel, could a heart so confiding and trusting and playful and gentle as thine, Ever feel a remorse, or a grief, or a sadness ?—It has mingled with sorrow in mingling with mine—

When thy love like a waft of the wind from the southland had blended with love from my shadowy soul,

Then I fear that a chill from the dark of my nature
had whispered to thee of a mystical goal.
But let that go by. In the depth of my being I
have treasured thy love, nevermore to dissever.
It is mine, it is thine—let eternity witness!—I will
claim thee and love thee for ever and ever.

Then adieu, Bonnibel de la Santa Ynez!—then
adieu! but remember, remember the past,
When the years of the future shall gather about
thee, and the gloom of the eventime round
thee is cast;
When the aftertime summer above thee is lonely,
then think of that morn in the summer of bliss,
When all nature was hushed in the wonder of glad-
ness, and the sky bended down in a rapturous
kiss.

Remember that morn in the shade of the willows,
where the river was clear as a crystal, and low
Were the whispers of waves; and we sat 'mong the
flowers, and watched the glad river a-murmur-
ing flow.

And thy hand was in mine while I told thee I loved
thee, and thou said'st that we never and never
should part;

And in rapture I blessed thee, caressed thee, and
pressed thee to my bosom till heart was beat-
ing to heart.

But let that go by. 'T is the part of a story which
the world shall not know; it shall never be told.

We will shroud it in mystery ever, and deepen the shadows of time while the past they enfold.

We have parted. In parting we knew 't was forever ; the river beside us in beauty was gleaming ;

And the touch of thine hand was the saddest and kindest that ever I knew in my dreariest dreaming.

'T was a dream like a memory—passing and fading —fading and passing—but never away :

Then adieu, Bonnibel de la Santa Ynez ! we have met, and have loved, and have parted for aye.

BUENA VISTA.

YE summits of Sierras ! I am here !

I pause, and westward look for the last time.
Beneath me far the rolling hills appear,
And farther down is Sacramento's clime,
Wrapped in the fulness of the spring sublime.
From southward, but beyond my vision's ken,
Flows the Joaquin, the grandest theme of rhyme
E'er touched upon by bard's poetic pen—
I bid ye all adieu, but I will come again.

My way is east across the continent,
To lands where angry winters rave and roar ;
But, ere I turn, I pause in my intent,
And look again on California's shore.

The more I linger here, I love the more
Those undulating hills and plains below.
To me they overthrong with legend lore,
And in time's mighty current rise and flow,
As mysteries and dreams from out the long ago.

Around about me lie the century snows,
The snows that I have seen from plains afar,
All glittering in the light that ever glows
In summer days when skies all azure are.
And here I am where thunders scathe and scar
The crags, and in deep echoes live and roll
In dread when winter drags his booming car—
And here I am ! I feel my panting soul
Rise into ecstasy and throb beyond control.

The Golden Shore beneath me to the west,
Even in the distance beauteous more and more,
In verdure of the springtime proudly drest—
O beauteous, beauteous, beauteous Golden Shore !
To east I go where mountains cold and hoar
Frown o'er Nevada, gloomy waste and drear ;
But farther lands than these to wander o'er
Is now my task.—The eastern plains appear—
Farewell, thou Golden Shore ! the parting hour is
near !

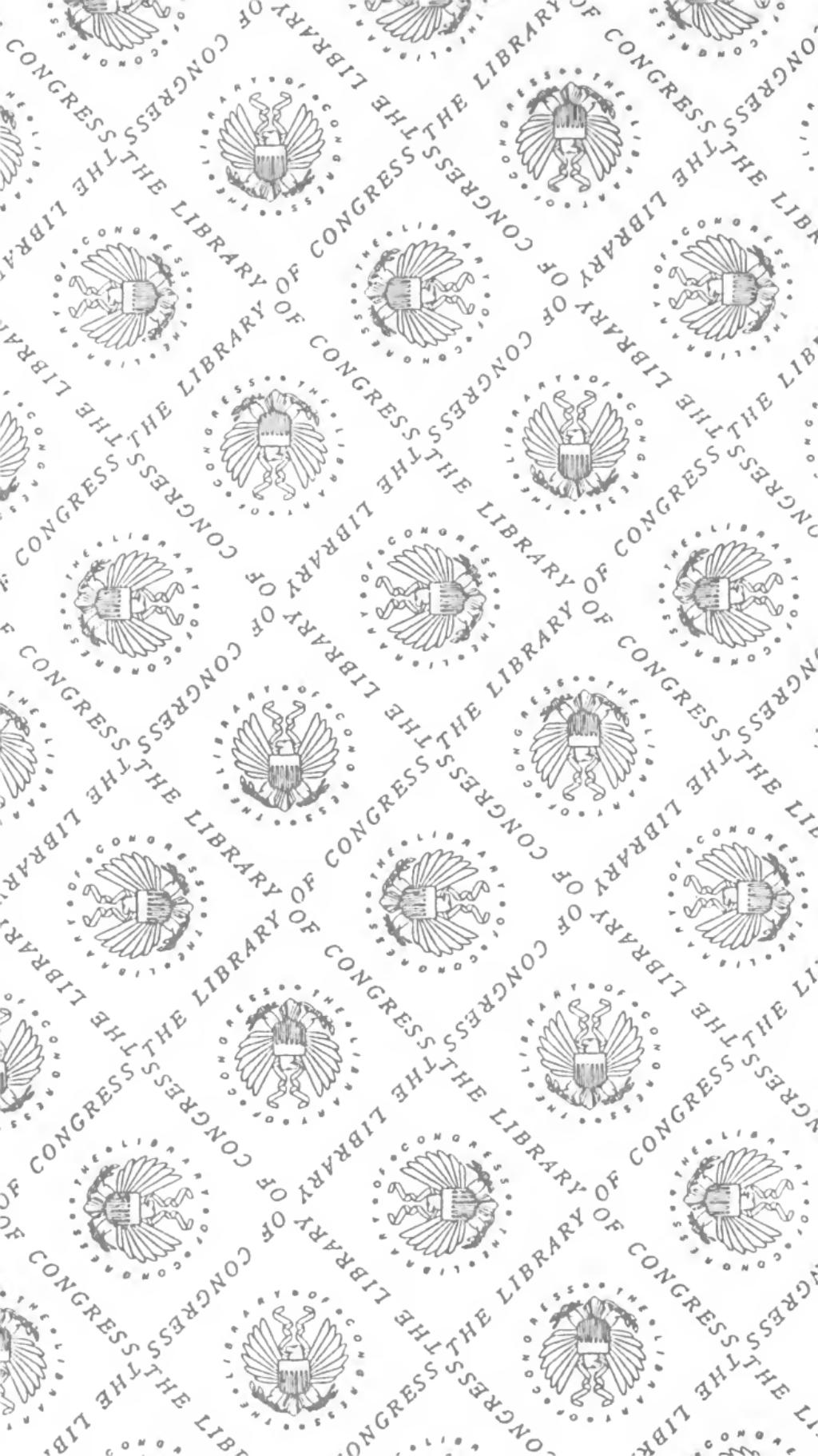
A SONNET.

THEN fare thee well, bright land, but not for aye,
I 'll come to thee again when spring shall blush
In conscious beauty, and thy zephyrs play
Where weeping willows idly swing, and brush
Along the shaded flowers the livelong day.
I 'll dwell again where roaring rivers rush,
And mountains rise in grandeur proud and gray,
Or white with snow and cold, where glaciers crush
The rocks by pressure slow—I will return,
Fair land, again to thee—I 'll come again
In happier days than this—I 'll ever yearn
For thee until I come again, and then
I 'll with thee stay forever. But, adieu
To-day to summer fields and skies of summer blue !

THE END.







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